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WHAT IS SHE?

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED (FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, NO. 39, PATERNOSTER-ROW,)

AT THE ANTI-JACOBIN PRESS, PETERBOROUGH-COURT, FLEET-STREET, BY T. CROWDER, GUN-STREET, SPITAL-SQUARE.

1800.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

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DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS HARRIS, ESQ.

SIR,

THE formal Dedication of so trifling a Performance, may, I fear, have the Appearance of Vanity; and I am perfectly aware, that the Suffrage of an Anonymous Author, is of small Value, where the Esteem of the World has already been so amply and so justly bestowed: but my Object in this Address is, I trust, more laudable than the Indulgence of Literary Egotism, and more reasonable than the Hope that such Praise as mine can be of Consequence. I wish to persuade Writers of better talents, who have a Turn for Dramatic Composition, that the formidable and repulsive Tales of Delay and Difficulty, incident to a Communication with Managers, are not always to be credited;

dited; and that, judging from my own Experience, I venture to assure them, they will, in you, Sir, find an encouraging Candor and Politeness, which the timid and inexperienced Dramatist will feel how to appreciate, better than any Language can suggest. Such a Motive will, I hope, plead my Excuse, and however I may fail in being useful to others, I have the highest Gratification myself in an Opportunity of expressing those Sentiments of Respect and Esteem, with which I am,

SIR,

Your most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

May 17th, 1799.

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mr. BETTERTON.

'TWAS said, long since, by sev'ral moral sages,
That man's short life comprises diff'rent ages;
From childhood first, to manhood we attain,
And then, alas! to childhood sink again.
The same progressions mark dramatic taste,
When manhood 'twixt two infancy's is plac'd.
When first the scene, the moral world display'd,
The Muses limp'd without Mechanic Aid:
Then Bards and Monsters labour'd side by side,
And equal fame, and equal gains divide.
Together Actors, Carpenters rehearse,
And the wing'd Griffin helps the hobbling verse.
The saddest tale demands (the heart to seize)
Confed'rate lightning, and the show'r of peas;
Nor wit, nor pathos, Audiences require,
But quaint conceits, with dragons, storms, and fire.
At length Taste's manhood came, the Stage improv'd,
Without a Storm Monimia's sorrows mov'd;
Then Love and Valentine could charm the Fair,
Tho' not one Cupid dangled in the Air;
"To Scenic Monsters Bevil was preferr'd,
"Nor found a rival in some fierce Blue-Beard."
The empassion'd verse, Wit's pointed moral aim,
The Audience charm'd, and fix'd the Author's fame.
But all must change—behold the Muses mourn,
And, drooping, see Taste's infancy return;
Again the Bard calls forth red stocking'd legions,
And show'rs of fire from the infernal regions;
Again, storms darken the Theatric sky,
And strung on ropes the fearful Cupids fly:
Again pale ghosts stalk tunefully along,
And end their visit, just as ends the song.
The siege, th' explosion, nightly concourse draws,
And castles burn and fall—with vast applause!
To night a female Scribe, less bold, appears,
She dreads to pull the house about your ears;
Her inexperienc'd Muse no plan durst form,
To raise the Spectre, or direct the Storm;
And if her pen no genuine plaudits steal,
From ears—to eyes she offers no appeal;
Her Muse, tho' humble, scorns extrinsic art,
And asks her meed—from judgement to the heart.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Caustic Oldstyle	*Mr. Munden.*
Belford (Lord Orton)	*Mr. Holman.*
Bewley	*Mr. H. Johnston.*
Period	*Mr. Lewis.*
Jargon	*Mr. Fawcett.*
Ap-Griffin	*Mr. Townsend.*
Gurnet	*Mr. Emery.*
Glib	*Mr. Farley.*

Servant.

Mrs. Derville	*Mrs. Pope.*
Lady Zephyrine Mutable	*Miss Betterton.*
Mrs. Gurnet	*Mrs. Davenport.*
Winifred	*Mrs. Litchfield.*

SCENE—*Carnarvonshire.*

The TIME—*From the Morning of one Day, till the Evening of the next.*

☞ The words between inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

WHAT IS SHE?

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A small House with a Garden before it, and a Seat on which* WINIFRED *is discovered Spinning.—In the Front of the Stage a River and a Bridge.—In the back Ground the Abbey, Mansion-house, and a distant View of the Welch Mountains.*

WINIFRED. *(singing)*

" She thank'd him, and said, she could very well walk,
" For should she keep a coach, how the neighbours would talk."

HEIGHO! I believe the dismal buz, buzzing of this wheel gets from my ears to my heart. Perhaps, after all, 'tis Mrs. Derville's fault—She is too good, or, at least, too silent for one to be comfortable with her. What signifies her good humour, if she never talks enough to shew it? Ah! if she was but like my poor dear late mistress, Mrs. Everclack! to be sure she died of a consumption; but while she did live, it did one good to hear her—so lively, such a charming larum from morning till night.

Enter

Enter Lord ORTON *(as Mr.* BELFORD.)

Well, my Lord, I'm glad you're returned.

Belford. Hush, hush, good Winifred! You will certainly forget yourself, and call me by this title in Mrs. Derville's presence. But tell me, how has she been in my absence?

Winif. Bad enough, I can assure your Lordship—Mr. Belford, I mean.

Belford. You make one miserable, Winifred. What has happened; is she ill? is she unhappy? *(anxiously)*

Winif. Oh, worse! there are remedies for bad health and bad spirits; but that sort of neither one thing or other like feel, I believe the first doctors, or the merriest bells in Caernarvonshire, can't cure it. Lord, we've been as dull as the black mountains.

Belford. You surprize me. Why, I thought Mrs. Derville had been elegant cheerfulness personified; every smile on her countenance seems to declare war against melancholly.

Winif. Mrs. Derville, chearful! Good lack, good lack, what hypocrites we women are!

Belford. Surely, Winifred, you cannot mean Mrs. Derville, she is not—*(in an accent of alarm and suspicion)*

Winif. Yes, but I say she is; and no more like what she seems than I am to Edward the Black Prince.

Belford. You distract me—Have you perceived any thing improper in Mrs. Derville's conduct? *(still in a tone of interest.)*

Winif. To be sure I have; every moment she passes alone, she grieves, and pines, and sings such woe-begone ditties, 'twou'd make a Turk yearn

yearn to hear her. Yet, when she leaves her room, she is as sprightly as the river Dee; smiles like the vale of Glamorgan—in short, she is just what your Lordship has been pleased to fall in love with, and to woo in masquerade.

Belford. Extraordinary! And has she always been thus?

Winif. Always—from the moment I entered her service on the death of my late mistress at Leghorn, till this blessed morning, I have never seen her wear a smile, but as a mere holiday dress to meet the world in.

Belford. Incomprehensible woman! Her situation, her mind, every thing about her, is mysterious. Yet my heart mocks at the doubts of my reason, and I have scarcely courage to wish them satisfied—yet I must know more of her, or endeavour to forget that I have known her at all.

Winif. Aye, my Lord, you're quite right—one can bear to see one's friends miserable; but not to know why, is too much for christian patience. Dear me, how I stand talking here, and have forgot to tell your Lordship the news.

Belford. What news! does it concern me; does it relate to Mrs. Derville?

Winif. Why, as to concerning my mistress, I can't say; but I'm sure it concerns your Lordship to know, that since you left the village, your sister Lady Zephyrine Mutable, Mr. Deputy Gurnet, her guardian, and a mort of company are arrived at the Abbey.

Belford. Arrived at the Abbey! This is, indeed, unlucky: 'tis impossible, then, I can remain long undiscovered. Yet hold—You are certain you never communicated my secret to any one, and that I am not suspected in the village?

Winif. Oh, quite sure—I can keep a secret myself, though I own I do like to know other people's. Not a doubt is entertained of your being any thing more than what I have introduced you for to my mistress; that is, as Mr. Belford, a relation of my own, who has met with misfortunes in trade, and is come here to live cheap, and to seek employment.

Belford. I may yet then remain till I can satisfy my doubts, and come to some explanation with your charming mistress. My sister, Lady Zephyrine, was brought up here in Wales, with her grandmother, and I have been so much abroad, that we have not met since we were children, and should now scarcely recollect each other.

Winif. Yes; but then her guardian, Mr. Deputy Gurnet.

Belford. I know he used to transact money-matters for my father, but I have never seen him; and then as for tenants or servants, you know this estate has lately descended to me, and I have never seen it but in the assumed character of Mr. Belford. But tell me, have you observed nothing which can lead to a discovery of Mrs. Derville's real situation?

Winif. No; nor do I know why you persist in believing her higher born than she says she is. I'm sure now, my mistress isn't half so smart as farmer Gloom, or farmer Hoard-grain's, daughters.

Belford. 'Tis the simplicity of Mrs. Derville's dress and manners which distinguishes her from the vulgar. Then such active, and yet discriminating benevolence—such unobtrusive sorrow, such a love of retirement—all mark, at least, an elegant and cultivated mind, if not a noble birth. Unaccount-

accountable woman! Then her aversion to marriage, her hatred to mankind——

Winif. Why, to be sure, my Lord, as I tell her, that's the most unnatural thing—Indeed, I know of nothing more so, except your Lordship's expecting my mistress to fall in love with you, under the character of my relation.

Belford. This reserve and mystery of Mrs. Derville, and her avowed hatred of men and marriage, made it impossible to assail her heart in any way but by interesting her benevolence. She would have feared and avoided me as Lord Orton; but to the poor and unfortunate Belford she listens with kindness.

Winif. Yes; with kindness enough to satisfy any reasonable man; and I don't see why your Lordship should persist in this project of trying my mistress's sentiments---Love and a cottage against a coach and a coronet. Oh! tis too much for poor woman's frailty, and I declare nothing but the gratitude I owe your Lordship for saving my father's life would persuade me to become your accomplice. But I hear my mistress. Pray retire a minute. [*Belford retires.*

Mrs. DERVILLE *enters, musing and disturbed.*

Mrs. Derv. (*as she enters*) Yes, Marry---be as miserable as you please---but I will neither be accessary to your folly, nor witness to your repentance. You shall leave me.

Winif. What can be the matter? You seem angry, Madam.

Mrs. Derv. Oh! nothing unusual---only a pair of idiots conspiring against the peace of their

whole lives.---There's Alice says she's going to marry. (*with painful recollection*)

Winif. Lord, Ma'am, and if she does why should that make you angry? I'm sure its quite natural.

Mrs. Derv. So the vicious will tell you are their vices; but our reason was given us to correct them.

Winif. I'm sure, Ma'am, I never heard that people's reason was given them to prevent their marrying, though it might assist them to repent.

Mrs. Derv. Once more; I'll have no marrying in my house.

Winif. Was ever any thing so barbarous!

Mrs. Derv. I'll not have my rest disturbed by the eves-dropping of your amorous clowns, who will swear and deceive you as systematically as a rake of quality.---But I wonder Belford does not return---Heigho!

Winif. I'm glad, ma'am, you make some distinction in your hatred of the sex, however.

Mrs. Derv. Belford, you know, is useful to us; besides, he is your relation, and unfortunate; and I invent little services as a plea for assisting, without wounding him. (*in a tender melancholy accent*) Poor Belford has every claim---his manners are superior to his condition; and what is yet more rare, his mind is superior to adversity. (*while speaking, Winifred goes into the house, and*)

BELFORD *enters.*

Well, Sir, may I congratulate you? Have you succeeded in obtaining the employment you went in search of? or, if you have not found fortune in

quitting our village, I hope at least you have found amusement. *(recovering her gaiety)*

Belford. I am indebted to you Ma'am, for your good wishes; but I return with the unwilling independence of poverty; and for amusement, surely it is not a pursuit for the unhappy. *(in an humble and dependent tone)*

Mrs. Derv. (gaily) Ah! there, Sir, you mistake. What fills the haunts of dissipation, routs, balls, theatres? What crouds auctions with those who have no money, or exhibitions, with those who have no taste? What are the overflowing audiences of speaking puppets, and dumb-show dramas, what but refugees from the misery of their own reflections?

Belford. Yes, Madam; and I believe amusement is as often furnished by the unhappy, as sought by them. Lord Cornuto's last *fête* now, was given only to convince the world, that the honours of his head did not make his heart ache: and Mrs. Forestall's great public breakfast by moon-light, was merely to ward off the crash of an unlucky monopoly.--Yes, Ma'am, the great secret of modern life is appearance—there would be no living without concealing our miseries more cautiously than our vices. *(forgetting his disguise, and assuming an easy gaiety)*

Mrs. Derv. I fear, Sir, your severity is no more than justice? yet, for a person who has not been in an elevated station, you are well acquainted with the follies of one.

Belford. (recollecting himself) Who so likely, Madam, to see the follies of the great, as the tradesman, who makes a fortune by their profusion, or is ruined by trusting them?—Oh! there is a great deal of fashionable knowledge to be acquired between

between the first humble solicitation for the honour of giving credit, and putting an execution in the house to recover the debt.

Enter GLIB.

What a rencontre! By all that's unlucky, a servant of my father's, who must recollect me.

Glib. Good morning to you, Mrs. Winifred. *(seeing Mrs. Derville)* I beg pardon, Ma'am; but hearing the ladies at the Abbey talk of rambling this way, I thought you would like to have notice. Lady Zephyrine, Ma'am, and *(seeing Belford)* Lord Orton! !

Mrs. Derv. I understood his Lordship was abroad. *(not perceiving Glib's surprize)*

Glib. Hem! I thought so too. *(to Winifred)* But, if I may believe my eyes, I see——

Winif. Well, and what do you see? My brother's wife's first cousin, Mr. Belford. Is that any thing to gape at?

Belford. And now, I recollect, this is Mr. Glib. Nothing can be more lucky. Your mother's brother's wife, at her death, left you a trifling legacy, *(giving Glib a purse)* which I am very happy in having the honour to remit to you, Mr. Glib.

Glib. Faith, I'm my dead cousin's very humble servant, (*aside*) and my gratitude——

Belford. Oh, pray let your gratitude be silent, (*significantly*)

[*Mrs.* DERVILLE *goes to another part of the stage, so as to hear, without joining the conversation.*]

Winif.

Winif. Well; but what company are arrived at the Abbey? I find there's to be great doings to-morrow on Lady Zephyrine's coming of age.

Glib. Why, at present, there's only Mrs. Gurnet; and the Deputy, come down to enjoy himself, as he calls it, though he's more tired of the country already, than ever he was of 'Change after dinner-time. Then he fancies, because he's a citizen, that every man who lives west of Temple-Bar has designs on his wife, and that all the morality in the kingdom centres in the city. 'Twas but yesterday he quarrelled with Mr. Jargon for picking up Mrs. Gurnet's glove.

Winif. Why, I thought he was an admirer of Lady Zephyrine's.

Belford. (*with impatience*) is it possible Lady Zephyrine can admit such an admirer? Surely her birth——

Glib. Her birth!—Lord, Sir, you talk like one of Queen Elizabeth's maids of honour! Nobody minds these distinctions now. Money—money's your only master of the ceremonies, your usher of black rods and white wands: the Stock Exchange is the Herald's-office.—A well-timbered estate supercedes all the genealogical trees in the principality; and a French cook and a turtle shall bring together the peer of sixteen quarterings, and his own shoemaker. It has, however, been reported, her ladyship's complaisance in admitting Mr. Jargon's visits, arises from her having lost a considerable sum to him at play.

Belford. (*with suppressed agitation*) Distraction!—that my sister—(*aside*) and that the necessity of this fellow's secrecy should oblige me to hear his impertinence. (*turning to Glib.*) I thank you,

you, Sir, for your very agreeable communications. But, pray, don't let us detain you.

Glib. Oh! I shall vanish.—Has your lordship any commands for the Abbey? (*aside, but with a tone of impertinence*)

Belford. (*aside to Glib*) Yes, Sir—Silence and a place in my service, or the indulgence of your tongue, and a tour through the horse pond. You understand me?

Glib. (*turning to Winifred*) Oh dear! yes—I have the readiest comprehension.—And you, my fair manufacturer of goat's whey, have you any commands?

Winif. Yes—silence, and my hand at the parish-church; or a box on the ear—You understand me?

Glib. Oh, yes—But——

Winif. What are you debating between then—my lord's service and the horse-pond?

Glib. No, no—certainly not.

Winif. What between matrimony and the box o' the ear?

Glib. Well, well—matrimony first, and the rest will follow of course.—But meet me by and bye at the next style, and we'll deliberate on the choice of evils.

[*Exeunt Winifred and Glib separately.*

Mrs. DERVILLE, *who during the last part of the scene has sat down, comes forward.*

Mrs. Derv. This man's freedom seems to distress you, Mr. Belford.

Belford. No, Madam; I was only reflecting, that probably the lady at the Abbey was not very unjustly pourtrayed by this smart gentleman; for this

this is one of the cases, where the manners of the artist vouch for the likeness of the picture.

Mrs. Derv. (*with gaiety and spirit*) Perhaps not altogether. Lady Zephyrine has beauty, vivacity, and elegance. Yet a votary to whatever is fashionable, anxious for the reputation of singularity; placing her vanity, not in being admired, but in being stared at; and wanting courage to avoid the follies herself, which she laughs at in others. But, with all this, generous and amiable, when she suffers her natural character to prevail over her assumed one.

Belford. She is fortunate, Madam, in an apologist: would it were possible to render you as favourable to our sex as you are to your own.

Mrs. Derv. (*seriously, and then assuming an air of melancholy*) Be satisfied, Mr. Belford, that I do justice to *your* worth as an individual; but do not expect me to become the panegyrist of your whole sex---Alas! does the wrecked mariner describe, with a flattering pencil, the rock where his hopes perished?

Belford. (*with warmth and interest*) Wrecked at the very beginning of life's voyage!—Oh! Eugenia! (*correcting himself*) Madam!—Mrs. Derville!—would you but deign to confirm your good opinion of me by explaining the mystery which hangs about you, perhaps the friendship that would participate your sorrows, might alleviate them.

Mrs. Derv. 'Tis mere vulgar affliction which is relieved by communication: but you take this too seriously, (*resuming her gaiety.*) Come, you know you promised me to superintend our little harvest—I am as yet but a novice, and could as soon navigate a ship as regulate a farm.

Belford. (*with embarrassed earnestness*) I wish my time were of more value, that I might have more merit in devoting it to your service. Tell me, may I, in return, ask one hour's serious conversation?

Mrs. Derv. An hour!—impossible!—unconscionable! Have I not too many serious hours already?—So, call our reapers together—scold the clowns—and, pray, do not take it into your head that I am some princess tending goats incognita. [*Exit.* (*singing*)

"Venus, now, no more behold me."

Belford. 'Tis thus she ever eludes any discovery of her real situation; and all I gain by the attempt, is a confirmation of that mystery which fills me with doubt and apprehension. I wish Period were arrived—our stratagem will, at least, assure me of her disinterestedness. Yet, he is so whimsical with his double profession of lawyer and author, that I almost fear he may defeat the purpose of his disguise by his absurdities. Yet, if Mrs. Derville's mind is vain, or interested, the temptations of title and fortune will not be diminished by a little of the ridiculous in the possessor of them. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT. II.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Saloon.*

Lady ZEPHYRINE, MUTABLE, GURNET, *and Mrs.* GURNET.

Lady Zeph. 'Twas delightful!---scoured the road, forded a river, took two hedges, and a garden-gate, while all the male animals were left behind, gaping, as though they had seen a centaur.

Gurnet. Aye, you make my bones ache with the thoughts on't. I warrant your ladyship shall never get me on a hunter again. Lost my wig, frightened away my appetite---dogs yelping, puppies sneering---A plague of such sport, where all the glory is, who shall break their necks first.

Lady Zeph. Why, I thought, Mr. Deputy, you told me you had hunted before.

Gurnet. So I have; but not o'horseback. I have been twice at the Ball-fac'd Stag on Easter Monday.

Lady Zeph. What, in a gig, I suppose, crammed with Mrs. Gurnet, all the children, and a plentiful provision of cold ham and cheesecakes.

Gurnet. And very snug too. And let me tell your ladyship, much more becoming than your mettlesome horse, dragoon caps, and rivalship with your grooms.

Mrs. Gur. I beg, Mr. Gurnet, you won't expose us by your vulgarity. The Bald-fac'd Stag in Epping Forest indeed! 'Tis a martyrdom to a person of sentiment to hear you.

Gurnet. And yet I remember, my dear, when you used to make one of five stuffed in a little old chariot of the shape and dimensions of your father's till---and when the hunt was over, you would squeeze down country-dances at the Mansion-House, till your face was hardly distinguishable from your best red sattin-gown.

Lady Zeph. Now, really, Mr. Gurnet, you have the most uncivil memory. Nobody remembers any thing now, further back than the last year's almanack. Nothing makes more confusion in society than a retrospective head.

Mrs. Gur. Ah, Lady Zephyrine, my nerves were very robust then; but poetry, and the Minerva press, refine the nervous system more than the whole college.—I'm become a mere sensitive plant—pure æther.

Gurnet. Like enough; but if your nerves have kept pace with your size or years, they're not much of the cobweb kind now; and as for æther—in my mind you partake more of the Dutch fog.

Mrs. Gur. Dutch fog!---Heavens! Mr. Gurnet! will nothing purify the grossness of your ideas? Was it for this that I addressed my ode to ignorance, to you, in one of the morning papers? And didn't I strive to correct you, by drawing your character as a jealous German Baron in my romance of "The Horrid Concavity," or "The Subterraneous Phantoms?" But all my refinement is lost in you, Mr. Gurnet.

Gurnet. No, no! I wish it was, Mrs. Gurnet, I shou'dn't care who found it. But I tell you, Mrs. Gurnet, I'm come here with my ward to enjoy the country, and to breathe the fresh air; and its enough to be awoke in the night with your starting

ing up to scrawl your ideas, as you call'em, without having my head stunn'd with your flights by day. 'Slife! one might as well be in the Stock Exchange.

Lady Zeph. Come, come, you must consider the sublimity of Mrs. Gurnet's genius.

Gurnet. What business have women with any genius at all? Have I any genius at all? Let her consider my poor head. I am sure I never argue with her, but I have a whizzing in my ears for four and twenty hours after, as though I had been in the heat of a battle. But now I think on't, how came your spark, Mr. Jargon, not to dine with us to-day?

Lady Zeph. Oh, fie!—he has, indeed, under pretext of visiting his uncle, followed me here; but we don't ask such people to our tables.

Gurnet. Not to ask one to your dining-table, whom you admit every night to your card-table? Gad, that's comical enough!

Lady Zeph. If you had never regarded my instructions, Mr. Gurnet, you wou'd have known that persons of fashion play cards with people at night, they are ashamed to speak to in the morning.

Gurnet. Then I say they're people of bad fashion. In the city, now, we eat with any body but we play at cards only with our friends.

Lady Zeph. Oh! mere Bank and Change notions. People of fine feelings are delicate in their society; but there's no society in a card-table: and the *rouleau* of his Grace is neither brighter nor heavier than that of a gambler, or——

Gurnet. Or a swindler. And let me tell your ladyship, that your people of *fine* feelings, are people of coarse morals. And I hope I shall never win

win a guinea that was'nt honestly got, or elbow a man round a table, whom I cannot shake by the hand in the street.

Lady Zeph. (*archly*) Why, really then, your card parties must be on a small scale—No gambling; only now and then a snug job in the Alley. No gambling there, guardian, eh?

Gurnet. Your ladyship's a wag—we only *speculate*; that's not gambling, you know.

Enter JARGON.

Jargon. Ladies, your devoted—I should have darted in upon you earlier—if I had supposed your ladyship ventured to encounter the horrors of the morning's sun.

Lady Zeph. Then you must have darted very soon; for we were out with the hounds before seven—wer'n't we, Mr. Gurnet?

Gurnet. Yes! oh yes! we were out. (*to Jargon*) do you understand any thing of surgery? Can you set a few limbs?

Jargon. What, hunter a little too sprightly? None of your bowling-green work—Faith! your ladyship's a wonder. Every thing in every place. Why, I have seen you tremble at a bit of a gale in the Park, and swoon after a walk from the auction-room in Bond-Street to Mrs. Puffabout's, your milliners.

Lady Zeph. Why, you wou'd n't have one bring one's opera-house languishing to Caernarvonshire; besides, 'tis Gothic to be delicate in the country. Lady Amazonia Suremark, who wou'd go into hysterics at the sight of a lame sparrow in Hanover-square, will kill you a couple of brace a birds before breakfast in Yorkshire.

Mrs.

Mrs. Gur. Elegant! What a subject for a sonnet in the manner of Petrarch!

Jargon. Gad, I like the idea. We'll adopt it, we'll propagate it. It shall be a system, and we'll call it Localism.

Lady Zeph. Do you know, Mr. Jargon, when you came in, we were discussing two of the most interesting topics-----

Jargon. Afflict me with stupidity, but they must be eating or money.

Lady Zeph. You are very near it. Eating and cards.

Gurnet. Yes; and I was saying, that eating's the bond of society, and cards the bane of it.

Jargon. Yes; but does your ladyship know we begin not to cuntenance eating---dont patronize eating much now---we don't feed voraciously---'tis out.

Gurnet. Here's a fellow! Eating out!---Pray, Sir, do you eat in partnership? for I observe you seem to speak in the firm of the house.

Lady Zeph. Oh! dont you know—Mr. Jargon belongs to the order of ridicules?

Gurnet. What, is there more of them? Faith, I thought he'd been the only one of the sort.

Jargon. No---we're very numerous---I'll introduce you!

Gurnet. Introduce me to a society where eating's out! I'd as soon be a capuchion.

Jargon. Our business is to push fashions, oaths, phrases, shrugs, and gestures. Let a mode be ever so ridiculous, stamp it with the name of one of our order, and it passes current. Absurdity, absurdity is the grand secret to which we owe our success. The first three weeks we sport a thing,

its

its laugh'd at; the fourth its abused, and the fifth becomes general.

Gurnet. But are you never, now, subject to little accidents, such as hooting, pelting, and such sort of familiarities?

Jargon. Why, they do quiz us now and then; but assurance does our business. If we were penetrable only five minutes, we should be scouted. So, we never trust dashing a new thing to a member who is not stare-proof. Our propagandists are all bronzed. Face---face is our motto---its your only system.

Gurnet. Aye, and a very proper one too; for, egad, I believe you're all face---and have neither brains, nor hearts. But, odso, Lady Zephyrine, what's become of the young man your father used to praise so? Why, he has'nt been here yet. Is he of the order of ridicules too?

Lady Zeph. You mean Mr. Bewley. (*aside, and sighing*) Alas! poor Bewley! That, Sir, has been over long since. (*affecting to recover her gaiety*) Oh! its ridiculous enough. You must know, when I first left Carnarvonshire, at my grandmother's death, the gentle swain followed me to town; and, for the first fortnight, we were the Damon and Pastora of all our acquaintance; but I grew ashamed of being laugh'd at, and the gentleman grew angry with me for being so. And because I happen'd to go two nignts in a week to Lady Rook's, he scolded, pouted, and set off for the country, to weave willows, and sigh to the winds.

Gurnet. Nay, I dont wonder he shou'dn't like to trust his dove in Lady Rook's nest.

Jargon. Sighs and winds---tears and streams---Gad, 'tis quite new---It won't take, though. Your great

great passions are not the system now. We don't patronize the violent passions. (*sings*) "To the winds, to the waves"——But we must see this Damon of your's a—famous subject for quizzing.

Lady Zeh. (*with a tone of tenderness and dignity*) I doubt, Sir, if Mr. Bewley will renew his visits here. If he does, perhaps it may be charity to warn you that he has courage enough to make his virtues respected, even by those who are too vicious to appreciate them.

Jargon. (*aside*) Whew! what, comedy on the stilts of sublime sentiments! All in the wrong system here.

Lady Zeph. (*to Gurnet*) Come, Sir, you know you were to attend us on a ramble to the pretty cottagers.

Gurnet. Aye, perhaps I may just step in, and take a syllabub.

Mrs. Gurnet. Well, now I think there's something most romantically interesting in a young woman's living in a farm here by herself, and nobody to know who she is, or whence she came. I'm sure there's some mystery.

Lady Zeph. 'Tis vulgar to be curious—and I really know no more, than that she is very young, very pretty, and very prudent, and doesn't seem accustomed to the state she is in.

Jargon. What, some farm-yard beauty, fresh from Marybone, come to retrieve. I'll wait on you, ladies, though gallantry's not the existing system—But I love to scamper the rustics.

[*Exeunt Lady Zephyrine, Mrs. Gurnet, and Jargon.*

Gurnet. If I had the making of laws, I think I could twist a system that should scamper you and your fraternity from Old North Wales to New South Wales---Mr. Jargon---(*yawns*)---Well, 'tis vastly pretty, and rural here. Rooks cawing, and lambs bleating---(*yawns*)---I don't know how 'tis though, but the stillness of the night here prevents me from sleeping. Somehow, when one's in London, the rumbling of the late hackney-coaches and early stages, the jingling of the clocks, and the bawling of watchmen, does so lull one, as it were!---(*looks up*)---Yes, wind's fair for the West India fleet——hope sugars won't fall though. Bad place for business this too---(*looks at his watch*) But when one's come into the country to enjoy one's self, one shou'dn't be thinking of business. No, I'll have done with Garlic-hill---I'll retire, and end my days in the calm delights of a farm and a dairy (*yawns*) Now, if Alderman Credulous would but pop in, and let one know how things go on in the Alley---(*yawns*)---Nothing like rural retirement. [*Exit, yawning.*

SCENE II.---*A Room at Ap-Griffin's House.*

Enter AP-GRIFFIN, *with a letter in his hand.*

Ap-Grif. Here's a pretty spark for you! His father mortgaged his estate twenty years ago, and now the law gives me possession, he writes to me about generosity. Aye, aye, when a man gets poor, he always talks a great deal about generosity. But, would generosity have built me this house? Would generosity have raised me from sweeping an office to be the master of one? Would generosity

generosity have rained a shower of diamonds on my head?—*(takes out a case of diamonds)*---There, now, was a lucky stroke! Comes an old fellow from the world's end, and before a soul could know who he was, or what was his business, dies suddenly in my house with these glitters in his pocket. Now, if I cou'd get rid of them!---Were either of my nephews honest, like myself——But no, Jargon's a rogue, and will cheat me; and Tim Period's an author and a fool, and will let others cheat him.---Ah! here comes Mr. Generosity.

Enter BEWLEY.

Bewley. I have called once more, Sir, to request I may remain in Bewley Hall a month longer.

Ap-Grif. It can't be, Sir---law must have its course. Zounds! hav'n't you had time enough? Hav'n't you appealed, reply'd, demurred, rebutted?---Why, you're the first man that ever thought a Chancery suit too short.

Bewley. And you are the first attorney that ever thought one long enough. But you know I have for some time been in expectation of hearing from my uncle in India; and I still hope, through the kindness of my relations there, to be able to redeem my estate.

Ap-Grif. Why, you don't want to redeem your estate contrary to law? Hav'n't we a decree in our favour? Besides, one great estate always requires another to keep it up; and if we hadn't foreclosed, possession would have ruin'd you. So, the law only turns you out a little sooner than you'd have turn'd out yourself I'm for the just thing---Always respect the law.

Bewley. Hark you, Sir—I'm no more bound by the law to tolerate your impertinence, than you are to possess gratitude or humanity—Therefore——

Ap-Grif. I'm gone, Sir—off the premises in an instant, though they're my own. So Sir, to avoid ceremony about precedence, here's one door for me, and there's another for you. [*Exit.*

Bewley. Well said, old Quitam. This fellow, now, was the son of my father's coachman, and used to crop the terriers, catch moles, and scare the crows off the corn. But, hang him, he's beneath contempt. Heigho! what avails wealth to one who has lost the hope of happiness? Oh, Zephyrine!—But I lose time: I will at least make one effort to preserve her, if not for myself. With her lofty and volatile spirit, expostulation will be useless. No, I'll pique her—alarm her pride by impertinence—excite her jealousy by neglect—and who knows but she, who abandoned me as a rational and tender lover, may take a fancy to me as a rake and a coxcomb?—"Allons! La feinte par amour." [*Exit.*

SCENE. III.—*Before Mrs. Derville's House.*

Enter Lady ZEPHYRINE, *Mrs.* GURNET, *and* JARGON.

Jargon. Really, now, 'was atrocious and abominable in your ladyship to quit Cheltenham so early.

Lady Zeph. I can assure you, neither the atrocity or abomination of quitting Cheltenham *(in a ludicrous tone, in imitation, but not absolutely mimicking Jargon)* is imputable to my inclination.

tion. But you know my rich uncle, Sir Caustic Oldstyle, after a family quarrel of twenty years standing, has just emerged from his Cornish estate, and is coming to visit us. My father and Sir Caustic, though nearly of the same age, had the difference of a century in their manners. Lord Orton lived like his cotemporaries—my uncle like his ancestors; and I believe nothing but the death of Sir Caustic's only son would ever have reconciled him to relations, who are so degenerate as to think and act like other people.

Jargon. What a loss he has inflicted on the fashionable world!—Why, your ladyship has scarce time to systemize the summer *costume.*

Lady Zeph. Oh, yes—as soon as the Dog-days began, I took care to introduce the Kamschatka robe, the Siberian wrapper, and the Lapland scratch.

Mrs. Gurnet. Well, I declare your ladyship has the most elegant imagination; though it is sometimes a little at variance with our climate.

Jargon. O, *no* woman of spirit ever thinks about climate or seasons—gauzes, muslins, cobwebs, in winter—furs, gold lace, and velvets, in summer—'tis the system.

Lady Zeph. Ha, ha!—don't you remember how poor old Mrs. Parchment *(mimicking the appearance of a person cold)* used to be shivering through a frosty night, and a thin opera, in a silver muslin, with her arms squeez'd to her sides, and the natural crabbedness of her features improved by angular contractions, till she gave one the idea of a petrified mummy?

Jargon. Yes; and when the cold drew tears from her eyes she pretended it was the effect of music on her sensibility.

Lady

Lady Zeph. Then, there was poor Lady Lovemode got a quinzy by going to see the skaters in Hyde-Park in an Otaheite chemise.

Jargon. But where's this queen of curds and whey? This is the door I suppose. Come, let's scatter the country folks. I love to make the hobnails stare. (*knocks at Mrs. Derville's door*) Holloa! here—Cuddy—Bumpkin! Is nobody at home?

Mrs. DERVILLE *comes out.*

Mrs. Derv. Lady Zephyrine, I hope nothing's the matter—your servant has so alarmed me——

Jargon. Servant! Faith, that's queer enough. Why, what the devil ails me? I hope I'm not such a quiz as to be ashamed. (*Apart*)

Lady Zeph. You must excuse my friend, Mr. Jargon, here; he's a little rude; but its his—system.

Mrs. Derv. At least, Madam, 'tis systematic; for when gentlemen adopt the dress of their grooms, 'tis very *natural* the *manners* of the stable should accompany the *wardrobe*.

Jargon. (*Aside, while Mrs. Derville talks to Lady Zephyrine*) Severe enough that! Bright eyes, sarcastic style—just the thing for a Faro-table. Now, if I could but take her to town, puff her, patronize her, she'll make me famous in a week.

Mrs. Gurnet. (*To Mrs. Derville, in a romantic tone*) Well, but really, young woman, I can't think you were born for the station you appear in. I shou'd like to hear your history. Nay, if you will, I'll write—four volumes, interspersed with pieces of poetry—call it translated from the German—'twill be delightful. I have a moonlight scene,

scene, a dungeon, and a jealous husband—all ready done.

Mrs. Derv. (*gaily*) Oh! my history, Madam, is the history of every body; and, for that reason, nobody wou'd read it. (*ironically*) 'Tis so common for men to be base, and women weak, that the vices of one sex, and the follies of the other, are subjects for jests and bon-mots rather than history.

Jargon. Faith, this girl's an original. I'll negociate with her, take her to town, and bring her into fashion.

Lady Zeph. Hush! what young man's that crossing the field?

Mrs. Derv. 'Tis Mr. Bewley, Ma'am.

Jargon. By all that's queer the weeping lover, the willow-weaver!—Come, Lady Zephyrine, a compassionate glance at least. (*sings*)

"Ah well a day, my poor heart!"

Mrs. Gurnet. I shall like to see him of all things. I do so doat on a melancholy lover.

Lady Zeph. Poor Bewley! how shall I sustain his sighs, his reproachful looks, his despair?—Would I could avoid him.

Enter BEWLEY, *singing negligently, as if he did not perceive Lady* ZEPHYRINE.

Bewley. "Merrily, merrily shall I live now!"—(*to Mrs. Derville, with an airy volubility, and an affectation of fashionable ease*)—What, my charming neighbour!—*La belle voisine!*—Ah! Lady Zephyrine!—I beg pardon—I didn't see you. The sun, you know, is apt to dazzle one's vision. I fear I am not *en regle*. I ought to have left my card at the Abbey; but the very morning

morning your ladyship arrived, I had promised to give the Miss Strongbows a lesson on the kettle-drum, and they have kept me at the Lodge ever since. 'Tis the very palace of Armida, the grotto of Calypso—no escaping.

Jargon. (*aside*) Pha! here's pining and willow-weaving! Lucky enough though—clenches my business with her ladyship.

Lady Zeph. (*with an air of pique*) I confess, Sir, the Abbey would have been a gloomy exchange for an enchantress's palace.

Bewley. Nay, 'pon honour now, you wrong me. I was absolutely dying to leave my name with your ladyship's porter; but these country belles, when they get hold of a man that's a little follow'd—(*conceitedly*)—not that I pretend—they're quite unconscionable.

Jargon. What, you are a favourite here! a sylvan deity! and all the Welch Daphnes pulling caps for hur, look you!—(*mimicking the Welch dialect*)—This is better than sighing to the winds, Lady Zephyrine.—Come, Mrs. Gurnet, you doat upon a melancholy lover—Here's your man.

Bewley. Fie! fie! shou'dn't boast—for its no sooner known that a couple of dear creatures are civil to one, than one's besieged by a whole bevy. Apropos! did you see my little Marquise at Cheltenham? I'm a down-right inconstant there.—Lady Zephyrine, you must make my peace for me. You know, a little inconstancy is but venial in the code of gallantry.

Lady Zeph. (*apparently mortified*) Oh, Sir I'm too much a stranger, both to your gallantries and yourself, to be a competent mediator.

Bewley, A stranger! your ladyship's pleasant. I thought we had been old acquaintance.

Lady

Lady Zeph. (coldly) Sir, you are so unlike the Mr. Bewley I once knew——

Bewley. As your ladyship is to your former self: but you're quite right—nothing so stupid as the sameness and constancy of an old-fashioned lover. Why, there's more variety in the imagination of a Dutch poet.

Jargon. Gad, you're correct—exactly correct—we scout it—it's quite out.

Bewley. Yet, here's Mrs. Derville would tempt one to forego the doctrine. One might be her slave till constancy became the mode.

Lady Zeph. (aside) I can support this no longer. Mrs. Derville, it grows cool—we'll bid you good evening—Mrs. Gurnet, Mr. Jargon, will you accompany me?

Mrs. Gurnet. I'll glide after you in an instant—I have just finished a sonnet to the screech-owl, and 'tis the most pathetic thing—— *Exeunt all but Bewley, Mrs. Derville attending them.*

Bewley. (alone) Thank Heaven, the task is so far over. But Mrs. Derville is too amiable to be trifled with. I'll after her and explain my conduct. Oh, Zephyrine! how much is it cost me to wound even your pride? Yet, if I can, by this innocent artifice, awaken her to a sense of her own dignity, and snatch her from the abyss of this ruinous dissipation, whatever fate awaits myself, I will meet it without repining. [*Exit.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE, *Lady* ZEPHYRINA'S *Dressing-Room.*

Lady ZEPHYRNA *and* MIRROR *discovered.*

Mrs. Mirror. It is very lucky your cousin left these clothes here, they fit your Ladyship exactly.

Lady Zeph. You think, then, Mrs. Derville will not discover me.

Mrs. Mirror. That she won't, if your Ladyship does but talk loud, stare at people, yet pretend not to see them, and behave rude; there's no fear but she'll take you for a modern fine gentleman.

Lady Zeph. Yes, I cannot doubt but this village wonder, this Mrs. Derville, is some adventurer, perhaps plac'd here by Mr. Bewley, at any rate the object of his attention; and under this disguise, and the assumed title of my brother Lord Orton, I hope, by professing a passion for her, at least to ascertain her sentiments with regard to him.

Mrs. Mirror. Ah, my Lady! I remember when poor Mr. Bewley began courting your Ladyship in the nursery, by teaching your birds to sing, and though your Ladyship being rich has a right to be fickle minded, I can't think that Mr. Bewley——

Lady Zeph. Yet his visit last night was plainly intended for Mrs. Derville—he hung on *her* looks while he scarcely deigned to regard *mine.*—But have I not deserv'd this, and is not my *present* meanness less excusable than my past folly.—Oh, Bewley!

Bewley! how easily might I have avoided the errors I find it so difficult to retrieve. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Mrs.* DERVILLE'S *House.*

Mrs. DERVILLE *at a Table, drawing—On one side of the Stage, a Closet, with a Door, and a Window projecting into the Room.*

Mrs. Derville. (throwing down the pencil) It does'nt signify—'tis in vain to attempt any thing new—this obstinate pencil of mine is continually multiplying the same resemblance—profile—three-quarter full-face—still the same features—yet 'tis singular—such animation—such sensibility—a poor relation of Winifred's too——" Heigho! " —I believe the house is now quiet, and I may " venture to try the effect of my harp in dissi- " pating a melancholy of which I dare not ask " myself the cause." *(enters the closet)*

SONG.—(*Written to a French Air.*)

" *Je crus tous mes beau jours.*"

HEART, I thought thy peace was flown,
Joy and hope for ever gone;
Reason's help I ask'd in vain;
Time, friendly healing,
Softens each feeling,
And peace and hope return again.

II

Tranquil hours! how short your stay!
Sorrow still hung o'er your way;
Time his aid but lent in vain:
Love softly stealing,
Points new each feeling,
And sighs and tears return again.

While Mrs. DERVILLE *is singing,* BELFORD *enters with Papers in his Hand.*

Belford. Enchanting woman! Still do I hover about her; still live but in her presence, who, perhaps, beholds me with indifference, or confounds me with the objects of her hatred. "Yet, no; she "who inspires a passion like mine, cannot herself "be insensible—Oh, Eugenia! if I am not de- "ceived—if I am happy enough to have created "an interest in your heart, I swear, whatever "your fate, nothing shall separate it from mine— "my hand—my rank—but she comes."—(*to Mrs. Derville*) I have executed your little commission, Madam, and have brought you the papers you desired.

Mrs. Derv. You are very exact, Mr. Belford —(*gives Belford some papers; he appears agitated*)—Shall I trouble you, Sir, to look over these accounts—I am so ignorant of business— Heaven's! what's the matter? You seem ill--- You seem disordered!

Belford. I confess it—I am at this moment so agitated, that I own I am incapable of obeying you.

Mrs. Derv. (*in an accent of kindness.*) Nay 'tis of no consequence—compose yourself, Mr. Belford, I entreat you—I asked your assistance as a friend, and surely did'nt mean to impose a task on you—Speak, Sir, you alarm me!

Belford. (*still agitated*) Madam—Eugenia.

Mrs. Derv. Tell me---what means this agitation? Have you any thing to impart to me?

Belford. Oh, I have indeed, if——

Mrs. Derv. (*with eagerness*) Speak, then— am I not---your friend?

Belford. (*aside*) How shall I begin?

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv (*to herself*) Oh, my fluttering heart!

Belford. (*aside*) Yet, should I be deceived--- Let me dissemble a moment if it be possible (*recovering himself*) I wished, Madam, to consult you on a subject, which distresses me more than I can describe. You have been so kind, have appeared to take such an interest in my fate, that I venture to intrude on you a confidence———

Mrs. Derv. (*anxiously*) Go on, I entreat you.

Belford. The old relation you have heard me speak of, and on whom I depend to retrieve my affairs———

Mrs. Derv. Well, and———

Belford. Has persecuted me to marry.

Mrs. Derv. (*tremulously*) To marry! You to marry!

Belford. Yes, Madam; me.

Mrs. Derv. (*with an air of pique*) And so you are come to consult me about it?

Belford. Yes, Madam; I thought, perhaps—

Mrs. Derv. (*resentfully, yet affecting indifference*) Oh, Heavens! in these cases, people have nothing to do but to take their own counsel. (*with volubility and assumed pleasantry*) I dare say now your uncle has discovered you have a fancy for some farmer's daughter—very young, very blooming, very silly, and very credulous, whom you will adore the first month, neglect the second, and abandon the third.—'Tis all in the usual course of things—nothing extraordinary in it; and I wonder you should come to consult me about such trifles.

Belford, Yet hear me.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. (*rapidly, with a tone of irritation*) Oh! it seems the very dæmon of matrimony possesses the whole principality—Every body talks of marrying. Marry, marry then, I beg you, Sir, and leave me in peace.

Belford. Reflect a little, Madam, that if I were so entirely decided, I should not consult you. Believe me far from desiring such a marriage, I have ever opposed it, and my unwillingness originates in a passion, which is, at once, the delight and torment of my life—A passion I have never yet dared to disclose.

Mrs. Derv. (*more composed*) That, indeed, is different—You love, then, my friend?

Belford. (*passionately*) Yes, I love, Madam; ardently love a woman that I do not yet know; but who, by being known, can only be more adored. (*Mrs. Derville listens with agitation*) A woman whose sense and sweetness would have captivated my heart, though it had not already been subdued by her personal attractions—A woman, all charming, in whom there is nothing to regret, but the profound mystery which envelopes her—A mystery, which might appear suspicious, did not the circumspection of her conduct bid defiance to calumny—"did she not "nourish a prejudice against mankind, which, "while it guards her own reputation, is the de-"spair of those who aspire to touch her heart---"a prejudice, of which I am, myself, the first "and most unfortunate victim."

Mrs. Derv. (*half gaily*) Do you know, Sir, that you are an orator? absolutely eloquent.

Belford. Oh! I could speak still better, would the woman I love but deign to answer me.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derville. (*confused*) Perhaps the answers which reach the ear, are not always the most expressive.

Belford. (*taking her hand*) doubtless not—and if I dared to believe—to hope———

Mrs. Derv. (*half archly*) Come, release my hand, and tell me—Is this fair one that won't answer, rich?

Belford. She is for me—And it is this consideration which restrains me—Alas! my ruined fortunes are unworthy of her.

Mrs. Derv. (*feelingly*) You deceive yourself. Our sex are naturally tender and generous.—And I know those, to whom a lover sincere and affectionate, and unhappy, would be more formidable than the splendid homage of the first prince in the world—But alas!

Belford. Proceed, I conjure you.

Mrs. Derv. (*with an accent of depression*) But where find such a lover, such sincerity? Where is the man that has not to reproach himself with the misery of woman? Is there a female who has not, some time in her life, been the victim of her sensibility?—(*becomes impassioned as she proceeds, and ends almost in tears.*)---"Yet, you "wonder that we become false, dissipated co-"quettes, and sometimes worse. Warm, en-"thusiastic, we fancy life a path strewed with "roses. We expect to find nothing but hap-"piness and integrity."---At an age when our hearts are tender, and our reason weak, we make that choice which is to fix our destiny for ever---and she who, perhaps, might have lived in the bosom of peace and virtue, had she been fortunate in her first affections, irritated and degraded by the conduct of a seducer, devotes herself to all the vices which his example has taught her---

and

and thus revenges her own wretchedness where ever her charms procure her dupes, or victims.

Belford. (*alarm'd*) Oh, misery! is it possible you can have been exposed to these horrors---

Mrs. Derv. (*with dignity*) No, Sir; I have nothing to reproach myself with. 'Tis this consoling idea of my own innocence, which has supported, and still supports me under my misfortunes. (*feelingly*) Yet, the deceit, neglect, ingratitude, I have experienced—Oh, Sir! you know not what I have suffer'd.

Belford. Speak then—deposit in the bosom of friendship this sorrow so inconceivable to all the world. Never will I- -

Mrs. Derv. I believe you; this dislike to society---this gay misanthropy, to which, however, I owe the little repose I have long felt, yields to the tender interest you have inspired. Learn, then, I am not what I appear.---I was once——

Enter WINIFRED.

Belf. Cursed interruption! at such a moment too!

Winif. Dear Ma'am, here is Lord Orton just arrived from abroad; he's been strolling about among the tenants, and desires to see you. (*aside to Belford*) Its your friend, Counsellor Period, I suppose, in masquerade.

Mrs. Derv. Surely there's no necessity for my admitting him. What can his business be here? am I ever to be persecuted?

Winif. Oh, he's your Landlord, you know, Ma'am, and Lady Zephryne's brother. I must ask him in.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. Well, well, if I must——
[*Exit Winifred.*
But pray, Mr. Belford, do you entertain his Lordship while I compose myself a little, our conversation has so agitated me. [*Exit.*

Belf. (*alone*) How unlucky that Period shou'd come at this juncture, and without apprising me of his arrival. Our stratagem too, now seems unnecessary, (*doubtfully*) I am—at least, I think I am, nay, I ought to be satisfied—Mrs. Derville—is every (*with the air of the man endeavouring to believe what he wishes*) thing I can desire—Why, then,—Yet, as Period is here, he shall make this one trial, and then—I bid adieu to doubt for ever.

Enter Lady ZEPHYRINE, *as Lord* ORTON.

Confusion! (*with a gesture of surprise*) Why—What! this is not Period—'Sdeath! what can it mean? Oh! I have it—Some friend, I suppose, whom he thinks will act the part better than himself. Yes, yes; it must be so, Mrs. Derville, Sir, will be here in an instant.

Lady Zeph. (*confused*) Sir, I—I—

Belf. I say, Sir, Mrs. Derville will wait on you immediately. (*with a tone of intelligence*) But how is it that Mr. Period has entrusted our scheme to you? Is he arrived? Is he in the village?

Lady Zeph. (*perplexed*) Really, Sir, I don't understand you. A scheme—a Mr. Period—Upon my word, I know no such person—I presume you are informed my name is Orton?

Belford. Yes, yes; A Peer of my friend Period's making. You see I know the whole plot—

However, I find you can keep a secret; but there's no occasion to keep a man's secrets from himself. You understand what I mean?

Lady Zeph. (surprised) How the deuce shou'd I? What, do you take me for a necromancer, a conjuror?

Belford. Why, I tell you, I know the whole story. You have assumed the title of Lord Orton, and are come in this disguise to discover Mrs. Derville's real character and sentiments—Now are you satisfied?

Lady Zeph. (alarm'd and confused) Heavens! I am discover'd. Well, Sir, as you seem acquainted with my disguise, you, perhaps would not advise me to proceed. Shall I—ought I?

Belford. By all means—As you've gone so far, make this one trial. But are you sure you have all the story? Remember, you fell in love with her at Florence, followed her to Leghorn, surprised to find her here—Be sure you act your part well.

Lady Zeph. Why, the man's certainly mad—Either a poet, or a speculator—But I'll e'en profit by his instructions. Oh, don't fear—nothing so easy to imitate as a modern beau. You know it requires no talents.

Belford. Take care tho' not to shew we have any intelligence together.

Lady Zeph. (archly) Certainly—certainly—She shall not suspect any intelligence between us. Besides, you may contrive to quarrel with me.

Belford. Hush! here she comes—Now, don't forget Florence, Leghorn, and the little Marquis.

Enter

Enter Mrs. DERVILLE.

BELFORD *retires a little in the back ground*

Mrs. Derville. (with a serious, but easy manner) To what, my Lord, am I indebted for the honour of this visit? Has your Lordship any directions to give concerning the farm?

Lady Zeph. (*affecting surprise*) Excuse me, Madam, this recontre is so unexpected, so transporting, so superlatively fortunate; so, so surprising, that I am unable to explain, but another time, a more favourable moment——

Mrs. Derv. (*looking attentively at Lady Zephyrine, discovers her*) Yes—the voice, the features—I can't be mistaken—This is some trick of Lady Zephyrine's—Nay, then, her Ladyship shall for once in her life, hear a little truth. (*turning to Lady Zephyrine*) I can assure your Lordship I am not a little surprised myself at your sudden arrival—I believe it was quite unexpected, tho' long, very long necessary.

Lady Zeph. How, Madam! I hav'n't heard of any accident.

Mrs. Derv. (*seriously*) Yes, my Lord, the worst of accidents. The peace, the reputation of a sister is in danger.

Lady Zeph. In danger! I thought the character of Lady Zephyrine—

Mrs. Derv. Yes; perhaps the same rank which renders her imprudence conspicuous, may protect her reputation; but what shall secure her peace—A worthy youth deserted—her fortune the prey of a gambler, or, fatally redeemed by her hand. Oh! Lord Orton, what have you not to answer for, in having selfishly sought your own amuse-

ment, while destruction has hover'd over those most dear to you.

Lady Zeph. Yes; I confess the conduct of Lady Zephyrine has been culpable---Oh, how much so! But surely the character of her brother, Lord Orton, (*confused, as forgetting herself*) that---that is, of myself, is without reproach.

Mrs. Derv. " It is not enough; my Lord, for " the great to be without reproach, they should " deserve praise. Fortune has given the world a claim on them; and the very virtues of the indolent are pernicious."

Lady Zeph. " You preach so charmingly, that " I believe you'll make me a convert---And I'll " engage that whenever I reform, Lady Zephy- " rine will do so too. (*gaily*) Heaven knows she " needs it."

Belford. (*comes forward*) Of the actions of Lord Orton, I am not qualified to judge; but Lady Zephyrine shall not be attack'd by a male slanderer, tho' he were her brother.

Lady Zeph. (*aside, as supposing his anger to be feigned, to promote the deception*) Very well indeed! You act passion admirably.

Belford. 'Sdeath, Sir, I am serious. Another time your calumnies shall not pass.

Lady Zeph. (*still supposing his passion affected*) When you please, Sir---Sword or pistol---I'am your man---hit you a side curl at fifty yards.

Belford. (*aside*) A few hours hence, and nothing shall restrain me. (*to Lady Zephyrine*) Sir, you shall repent this.

Lady Zeph. (*aside to Belford*) Admirable! never saw passion better acted---Now an oath or two.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. (*with an air of pique*) Belford so zealous a champion for her Ladyship—nay, then, I'll punish him—There's no consistency in man. (*in a coquettish manner*) Come, my Lord—I entreat you, drop the matter. Your Lordship's existence is too valuable to be risk'd for or against trifles.

Belford. Furies! she's coquetting with him! (*to Mrs. Derville*) I'll endure this no farther, (*formally*) Madam, have you any farther commands?

Mrs. Derv. No, Sir: and really, his Lordship is so pleasant——

Belford. That you wish for no additional society. I'm gone, Madam. (*at the side of the stage, while going off*) Sorceress! But an hour ago such fascinating tenderness! such angelic candour! and now coquetting with a ooxcomb before my face. Yes, I rejoice that I did not discover myself—Oh, Woman! Woman!

[*Exit Belford.*

Lady Zeph. (*in a romantic tone*) Ah, Madam, you see before you the most miserable of mankind! the most faithful, the most ardent, the most sentimental, the most—

Mrs. Derv. (*aside*) Ridiculous! how shall I contain myself?

Lady Zeph. (*kneels*) Madam, I have so long adored you, (*aside*) bless me, I forgot to ask how long—Then, hav'n't I pursued you from—(*aside*) (Heavens! I have forgot where) Oh! from Florence to Leghorn—from Leghorn to England, and from—

Mrs. Derv. (*agitated*) Alas! then I am betray'd!

Lady

Lady Zeph. Oh, no, Ma'am—indeed I'll never betray you.

Mrs. Derv. But, by what means came you acquainted——?

Lady Zeph. Oh! I'm acquainted with all—not forgetting the little Marquis—(*archly*)

Mrs. Derv. I conjure you, my Lord, in pity, tell me who informed you of all this?

Lady Zeph. (aside) Truly, that's more than I know myself. How shall I get off? (*turning to Mrs. Derville*) Excuse me—I dare not enter into explanations at present. I have the most powerful reasons for avoiding it. But meet me near the Hermitage about seven, and you shall be satisfied. In the mean while, tell me, I conjure you, have I not a rival? Is not Mr. Bewley a favourite rival?

Mrs. Derv. (*aside*) Ah! now the mystery of her Ladyship's visit is out. (*to Lady Zephyrine*) No, my Lord—Mr. Bewley is, I fear, too, too firmly attached to one who having deserved to lose his heart by her folly, may, perhaps, expect to regain it by unworthy artifices, and——

(*A noise and voices are heard without*)

Lady Zeph (*to Mrs. Derville*) I hear voices at the door—Permit me to escape on this side the village. I have particular reasons.

Mrs. Derv. This way, then, my Lord.

(*Mrs. Derville goes out with Lady Zephyrine*)

SCENE III.—*Near Mrs. Derville's House.*

Enter Sir CAUSTIC OLDSTYLE, *and* PERIOD, *in travelling dresses*—PERIOD *with a port-folio.*

Period. Why, I tell you, Sir, its the luckiest event of my whole tour between London and Carnarvonshire.

Sir

Sir Caustic. Lucky, you verbose coxcomb. (*petulantly*) Hav'n't we been overturn'd; wasn't I jamm'd under you and your Port-folio, and your bag of Briefs, till I can't feel the difference between my flesh and my bones? (*mimicking*) And now you tell me its lucky—its the very thing you wish'd.

Period. And so I did, to be sure. Here I'm come on a tour from London to North Wales, and hav'n't yet met with a single anecdote, not even one accident; no, not so much as a spoil'd dinner, or a sprained ankle—Nothing to describe, but turnpikes and sign-posts—Hav'n't I a hundred pages, all as dull as a great dinner? Then, you know we may indict the road.

Sir Caustic. No, puppy, we can't—The road was good enough—Wasn't it Molasses the great West-Indian's chaise and four overset us, as he was scow'ring along to bid for the estate that Sir Plinlimmon Pedigree lost last week at the hazard table?

Period. And what signifies? You were only overturn'd a quarter of a mile on this side the Abbey, instead of driving up to the door—Then, 'twill make such a figure in my travels back again. Why, here's a farm house; nothing ever was so fortunate—we go in, sit down to dinner—eggs and bacon—barn-door fowl and greens just ready; coarse, but clean cloth; sentimental farmer's wife; tears of sensibility on our part; curtsies and sympathy on her's.—Where's my pencil? Such language, such style! Thank ye, Mr. Molasses—'tis the luckiest circumstance for a travelling author to be overturned.

Sir Caustic. Here's a flourishing rascal! There happened to be but one pair of horses at the last

stage,

stage, and finding we were going the same road, I offer him a place in my chaise without knowing even his name; and now we've nearly got our necks broke, he tells me 'tis the luckiest circumstance. Aye, aye; this comes of your modern improvements---in my time people travelled with dignity and sobriety---none of your nick-nack springs and prancing steeds.

Period, Yes; then the vehicle resembled the lac'd waistcoat of the owner, large, rich, and heavy; while the very horses seemed to feel their importance, and moved like elephants in a procession. But then there were no tours or tourists, nothing but poor stupid selfish people, who only travell'd about their business, instead of being philanthropists like myself, and travelling to amuse the whole world.---Ah! yonder's my friend Belford---I'll just speak to him, look to the baggage, and be with you in an instant. In the mean while repose yourself at this farm house, and don't forget the barn-door fowl, and the sentimental hostess. Oh! I'll describe them in such a style! [*Exit.*

Sir Caustic. (*always in a tone of petulance*) And what should they travel for; to write nonsense, and set other blockheads a gadding after them.---A plague of your new-fangled notions and refinements! A fellow, now, that ought to be nail'd to his compting-house, from one year to another, like a sheet almanack, jumps into a carriage, kills horses, and breaks people's necks, that he may get in an hour sooner to an opera dancer, or a gaming table. [*Exit into Mrs. Derville's.*

SCENE

" SCENE---*A Room in Mrs. Derville's House.*

" *Enter Sir* CAUSTIC, *Mrs.* DERVILLE, *and* " WINIFRED.

" *Mrs. Derv.* I hope you're not hurt, Sir--

" *Sir Caustic.* Why, no; I believe the trunk " and limbs of the old tree have escaped safely, " and I have been weather-beaten about the " world too long to mind a little scratching on " the bark.

" *Mrs. Derv.* I'm sure, Sir, you must have " been greatly alarm'd, let me prevail on you to " take some refreshment.

" *Sir Caustic* (*looking at her attentively*) I " thank you—I thank you—I hav'nt had so " much civility without paying for it since I " left Cornwall.

" *Mrs. Derv. (with warmth)* Then I'm sure, " Sir, you have not *before* had occasion for it--- " Never did misfortune appeal in vain to the " hearts of my countrymen.---If you are rich and " prosperous, perhaps you may have met with " imposition, flattery, or selfishness; but had " you been a poor and friendless stranger, a thou- " sand hands had open'd to relieve you---a thou- " sand hearts have given you the tribute of " sympathy and compassion.

" *Sir Caustic.* Well, I'm glad to hear you say " so; I know in my time we were a generous " nation; but I see such changes, such carving " and gilding, such polish and ornament, that I " hav'nt yet been able to examine whether the " good old oak remains sound at heart.---I'm not, " you see, of the newest cut either inside or " out, and I can only tell you I love kindness, " and not the less for being set off by a pretty

" face.---Surely I think I have seen you before;
" were you ever in Cornwall?

" *Mrs. Derv.* No, Sir.

" *Sir Caustic.* Then I'm mistaken---for you are
" too young even to have been born before I
" retir'd there.---May I ask your name, young
" gentlewoman?

" *Mrs. Derv.* Derville, Sir.

" *Sir Caustic.* And your situation.

" *Mrs. Derv.* Not affluent, Sir; but equal to
" my wishes.—I rent this small farm under Lord
" Orton.

" *Sir Caustic.* Why then you can tell me a
" little about my niece; is she worth an old
" man's travelling from the land's end to see?

" *Winifred.* Lord, Sir, she is——

Mrs. Derv. Hush!---Lady Zephyrine, Sir,
" is young, gay, and elegant—a little lively, but
" I'll answer for the goodness of her heart.

" *Sir Caustic.* (*with warmth and severity*) Yes,
" but do you mean a good heart, as good
" hearts us'd to be fifty years ago---now women
" may *betray* their Husbands, *abandon* their
" children---yet have delicate feelings; shrink
" from the *name of vice*, and have the best
" hearts in the world.

" *Mrs Derv.* You mistake me, Sir---Lady
" Zephyrine——

" *Sir Caustic.* Yes, yes; I know your modern
" ethics, your splendid vices---your good hearts
" that ruin more tradesmen than all the swindlers
" between Hyde Park and Whitechapel---They
" won't do for me, I tell you.

" *Mrs. Derv.* Do not let your prejudices make
" you unjust, Sir---in spite of the gaiety of Lady

" Zephy-

" Zephyrine's manners---her feelings--- her sensi-
" bility——

" *Sir Caustic.* There again---her feelings---her
" sensibility---*(in a tone of petulance)*---What, I
" suppose she sighs over the distresses of a novel---
" wipes her eyes while a ghost in an opera comes
" out of his tomb to accompany the orchestra;
" but is shock'd too much at real misery to suffer
" its approach, and avoids sickness and poverty as
" though she herself were not human These fine
" feeling won't do for me---has my niece benevo-
" lence and common sense? I want none of your
" foil and tinsel qualities.

" *Mrs. Derv.* Indeed, Sir, you'll find her very
" amiable.

" *Sir Caustic.* Nay, I own I have seen a pic-
" ture of her, and have left her half my fortune,
" merely on the credit of her simple dress and
" modest countenance---her grandmother wrote me
" word two years ago, that she was the only young
" woman in the principality uncorrupted by
" modern modes, and London manners.---But
" come, I'm now sufficiently recover'd, and if you'll
" let your damsel shew me the way, I can reach
" the Abbey---thank you, fair lady, for your kind-
" ness, and if you'll permit an old man's visits---

" *Mrs. Derv.* I do not often mix in society,
" Sir, but the respect I feel for you---This way,
" Sir, let us assist you.

" [*Exeunt Mrs. Derville and Winifred,*
" *shewing Sir Caustic out.*"

SCENE III. *In the Country, near the Village.*
BELFORD *and* PERIOD *in conversation.*

Belford. And you absolutely know nothing of this coxcomb, who personated me at Mrs. Derville's?

Period. Not a syllable, my Lord, nor did I intend any coxcomb but myself should have that honour. Why, an action will lie at common law, and I'll so exhibit the fellow in my tour——

Belford. A truce with your law and your literature, and devise what's to be done. I dare not think of it, yet is there too great cause for suspecting that Mrs. Derville is herself in concert with the impostor, and that he is a favour'd rival.

Period. If she has promised you marriage, you may bring an action against her as soon as the wedding is over---or you may be revenged by a satire---and in either case, the Court of Common Pleas, or the Court of Parnassus—I'm your man.

Belford. Torment and furies! Will you be serious for a moment?

Period. Havn't I been serious my whole tour? Havn't I been reduced to transcribe doggrel from the country church yards, and dates from the doors of alms houses? and now you tell me I'm not serious.

Belford. I wish then your tongue were as barren of words as your head of ideas. Once more, can you suggest how we may discover this adventurer, this pretended Lord Orton?

Period. Really I can think of no better plan than for me to personate his Lordship, as we first proposed. Say that my letters and baggage have been stolen, and insist upon it that the thief must be the impostor she received at her house.

Belford. But what pupose will this answer?

Period. Why, I shall judge by her manner if she is really privy to the deception.

Belford. You are right. Nay, you shall get yourself installed at the Abbey—pretend a passion

sion for her as we originally plann'd, and if she stands the test, and clears up the mystery of her conduct, I will offer her my hand, and throw aside my doubts for ever.

Period. And I'll draw up the marriage articles, and relate the whole history in my travels. For if you know any little secret history of a friend, always publish it, nothing sells like private anecdote.

Belford. O, sell as many anecdotes as you will; all I desire is, not to be favoured with them gratis—So, meet me at my lodgings an hour hence, and I'll give you farther instructions for your reception at the Abbey.

Period. Yes; but will it be possible to impose on Lady Zephyrine and Sir Caustic?

Belford. On Lady Zephyrine perhaps not—but I'll give you letters, in which, without explaining my reasons, I shall apprize her of my return, and engage her for a few hours to favour the deception. You must, however, take care to see her alone on your first arrival—As for Sir Caustic, as I have never seen him, with her Ladyship's assistance, it will be very easy to prevent any suspicion on his part.

Period. There's one thing, my Lord, I had forgot. I've an old uncle in the next village, and if I meet him we shall be discovered.

Belford. Oh! your peerage will not last so long as you might be making your maiden speech—and it's not likely he will see you at the Abbey, still less at Mrs. Derville's. Yet stay, a thought has just struck me, but 'tis mean, detestable—But then does not the mystery, nay, the conduct of Mrs. Derville justify me.—No matter—if she loves me, love will plead my pardon;

don; if not, even her anger will scarcely add to my wretchedness. By means of my intelligence with Winifred, I can get concealed during your first interview.

Period. 'Tis eaves dropping, my Lord, and liable to an action. However, as you please, and I think your Lordship is authorised to take down the evidence in short hand.

Belford. Adieu! In an hour I shall expect you. My doubts and anxiety are worse than conviction; and I can endure this suspense no longer. [*Exit.*

Period (*taken papers out of his portfolio*) And now for my notes—Saw—yes—saw trees by the road side whether oaks or apples, not quite sure.—Saw between—Zounds! 'tis very hard, when a man travels on purpose to write, that he can see nothing but what other people have seen before him! Hold, though—(*Ap-Griffin enters and listens behind*)—Saw between Cum Gumfred and Aberkilliguen, young goats, an old fox, and a Welsh ass.

Ap-Grif. Eh! my nephew Period! How the devil came you to be ass hunting in Wales, when you should have been braying yourself at Westminster Hall. What business have you to be engrossing here by the road side, when you should be taking notes at the Old Bailey.

Period. Why, now, don't be choleric uncle, don't irritate the blood of the Ap-Griffins—I'm only *(aside)* 'Slife! what shall I say? I'm on the circuit—I'm on a tour—I'm going to publish "Travels in North Wales," and I thought (though it isn't absolutely necessary) I might just as well take a peep at the country, before I gave an account of it.

Ap-

Ap-Grif. Zooks! hav'n't you done with your nonsense yet? Why, when I was in London, your chambers were beset with printer's devils, bringing proof sheets, as you call'd them, of your "Tour to Wandsworth; with Remarks during a Voyage to Battersea." Ads-death! is this the way to rise at the Bar? to advertise yourself running about on a Tom fool's errand, as if nobody could see mile stones and church steeples but yourself.

Period. Why, if I have but a name, what signifies how?.

Ap-Grif. Yes, yes; I see you'r incorrigible—just as you were when you carried your briefs and your tours in the same bag to the Old Bailey, and astonished the court by beginning a flowery description of Botany Bay, instead of a defence *petty larceny.*

Period. I tell you, a professional man's nothing if he doesn't write—Don't all the physicians who have nothing to do at home, travel abroad, and write themselves into practice? Don't the clergy write themselves into livings? and don't the lawyers write plays and pamphlets till they get briefs?

Ap-Grif. Eh, Jackanapes! Did Hale ever rise by scribbling farces and tours, eh?

Period. Hale! dry—dry; dull as the *bon mots* of a news-paper. Language, Sir—nothing will do now but style. Only—only let me be Lord Chancellor, and you shall see Hale, and Bacon, and Littleton, and Coke, as much out of fashion as their own wigs and whiskers.

Ap-Grif. You reprobate, I shall see you hang-man first.

Period.

Period. Oh! I'll so reform the dissonant language of the law—then you shall see reports measured into blank verse—Briefs like the descriptions of the moon in modern romance, and chancery suits in the style of Gibbon.

Ap-Grif. Here's an unnatural coxcomb! Here's a profane rascal! wants to violate the venerable obscurity of the law.

Period. Then I'll have none of your John Does and Richard Roes—your Nokes and your Styles. Law shall be a comment on history and poetry. As thus—"Brutus versus Cæsar"—"Pan versus Apollo"—or in a conspiracy, "Menelaus and others versus Paris"---I'll explain the rest another time.—Bye, uncle.

Ap-Grif. How I could twist the profligate's neck! Why, sirrah, you're not leaving the country without letting me know how you came, and where you are going, and——

Period (*aside*) An inquisitive old blockhead, plague of him! If I tell him I'm going to the Abbey he'll follow me, and spoil our scheme. I won't hear him. *(going)*

Ap-Grif. Why, sirrah, I say, how came you here? Where are you going?

Period. I havn't time to tell you now. I'm in haste. I must be brief—Good bye, uncle, good bye!

Ap-Grif. What you keep me here an hour, prating with your Pans and your Cæsars, and now you're in haste—I must be brief, uncle, (*mimicking him*) I must be brief—Answer me, I say, or I'll crack—No, your skull's crack'd already—but I'll beat you, till you shall be of as many colours as a mildew'd parchment.

Period.

Period. Psha!—tiresome! You must know, then, that I came here with an old gentleman that's rich enough to buy the principality. I'm now going to dine with him at the next town, and then we set off in a chaise and four, for—for—for the Chester assizes.

Ap-Grif. Rich, did you say? And do you know him?

Period. Oh, yes! We've been hand and glove these three, ay, these seven years. He's the most comical old fellow—continually in a passion through pure benevolence; and is out of humour with all the world, merely because he thinks it neither so good nor so happy as it was fifty years ago. (*Ap-Griffin debating with himself, and standing between Period and the way he was going*)

Ap-Grif. Gad, a notion is just come into my head—Now, if I could but trust him, perhaps this rich stranger would buy the diamonds, and I do so long to get rid of them. Then, if this fellow here should cheat me—but no; the whelp's honest—A little wrong above (*pointing to his head*) but sound enough below (*pointing to his heart*) Nay! I'll e'en trust him. (*altering his tone*) Well, Tim, I believe I must forgive thee, thy tours, and thy whims. I'm sure thee art an honest lad after all.

Period. What does the old crocodile mean now?

Ap-Grif. Dear Tim, its just come into my head that you can do a little job for me—can you be secret?

Period. As a chamber counsel.

Ap-Grif. Can you be honest?

Period. Ah! thankye, am I not your nephew?

Ap-Grif. Hum—Nay, I don't doubt your honesty—even a lawyer, you know, shoudn't cheat his own flesh and blood. Always do the just thing, Tim, when its not against the law. Why, I've got some jewels here to dispose of for a client—Mind, they're not my own—Now, don't you think your rich fellow-traveller might purchase them. Here they are. (*takes out the jewels and gives them to Period*)

Period. They're rich enough for the great Mogul. The gentleman's old, and, perhaps, may not care for them; but I'll try, if you will——

Ap-Grif. Do then, my good lad (*in a doubtful wheedling tone*) I know, Tim, thou'lt be honest.

Period. Oh, if you doubt it!

Ap-Grif. No, no; I don't doubt. But I may as well go along with you to the gentleman.

Period. 'Twill be too far, Sir—Pray don't attempt it.

Ap-Grif. No, no, it won't—I can walk, Timmy, I can walk.

Period. (*aside*) Zounds! what an old torment it is! Indeed, Sir, 'tis too far, so if you can't trust me, take the diamonds again.

Ap-Grif. Why the deuce can't you let me go with you. If you won't, I'll follow you, and offer them to a gentleman myself.

Period. 'Sdeath! what shall I do? I must even tell him partly the truth—only, instead of an innocent frolic, I'll say I'm engag'd in a bit of roguery, and then he'll be sure to keep my secret.

Ap-Grif. What are you muttering? Come, let's set out. I thought you were in a hurry.

Period.

Period. So I am; but——

Ap-Grif. But what!

Period. Ha ha! its comical enough too---it will make you laugh. Why, you must know, I'm going to rhe Abbey with the gentleman I have been telling you of, and I have pass'd myself upon him for Lord Orton. Nobody here knows his Lordship's person; so I'm to marry, in his name, a great heiress that's just come down on a visit. Isn't a special project? Isn't it a good thing?

Ap-Grif. (alarmed) Oh, yes; a devilish good thing. (*aside*) I wish I had my diamonds again though, honest Tim---(*to Period*) Udso, I had forgot---give me the case—there's a ring wanting.

Period. Give it me, then, and I'll wear it—as I am to personate a Lord, you-know.

Ap-Grif. But now I think on't, I don't know what to ask; so I'll stay till Ephraim Lacker, the Jew, comes this way.

Period. No, uncle, no; I understand diamonds, and understand *you*—You're afraid to trust me, but I'm a very honest fellow, though I'm *your* nephew. I shan't, however, part with the jewels; for, now you have my secret, I'll keep them as hostages, for your secrecy; so come to the Abbey this evening, enquire for Lord Orton, and you shall have either the diamonds or the value of them.

Ap-Grif. Well, then, I'll keep your secret---but remember now, Tim, honesty's the best policy—always do the just thing. Hark ye, though, what new freak's this? I see you've got a cockade in your hat.

Period. To be sure—why, I'm in the volunteers. Who so fit to fight for the laws as those who live by them.

Ap-Grif. If I had known, though, that this fool had improv'd so much by my counsels as to be such a proficient in knavery, I woud'nt have trusted him—A little roguery's a very good engine to employ against others, but we always view it with virtuous indignation when it may be turn'd against ourselves. [*Exit*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Music Room at the Abbey.*

Through doors. PERIOD *as Lord* ORTON, *Sir* CAUSTIC OLDSTYLE.

Sir Caustic. And why the deuce didn't you tell me on the road, that you were my nephew?

Period. And how shou'd I know I was your nephew, unless you had told me you were my uncle—To say truth, however, I did suspect it, and only had a mind to surprize you agreeably.

Sir Caustic. (*ironically*) Yes, yes—I'm very agreeably surpriz'd. I wish I was in Cornwall again, tho' 'twere at the bottom of a tin-mine. The transition from soft sea breezes to the keen air of these Welch mountains, would throw some people in a consumption; now I plainly perceive it will give me the jaundice—I hadn't been here an hour before one begins ringing rhymes in my ear, till she's as hoarse as a drill serjeant. Another stuns me with enquiries, about the price of turtle and consols. Yet my own niece is not *visible,* as they call it.

Period. Sir, it's the custom amongst people of rank to——

Sir Caustic. What to be visible every where, and to every body, but at home, and to their own relations. A plague o' such customs.

Period. They're very necessary, Sir, for people in a certain style---myself, for example. Were husband and wife, father and son, uncles and nephews, to have free access to each other, twou'd occasion

occasion more practice than we shou'd get thro', if Courts of Justice were as numerous as gaming-houses, and term to last all the year.

Sir Caustic. Get thro' in the Courts, I don't understand you.

Period. For instance now---there was a Crim. Con. cause, where I pleaded for defendant.

Sir Caustic. You pleaded!

Period. Yes--(*recollecting himself*)---in the house you know, as a Peer.

Sir Caustic. Plead for the defendant in a Crim. Con. cause!! Here's morality!

Period. But hold---I had forgot my commission. You old fashion'd people love magnificence more than convenience. Now, if you are fond of diamonds, and want to make a purchase, here are some. Do look at 'm---they're the prettiest rings.

Sir Caustic. Not I---A man should be asham'd to wear a diamond on his finger, while there's an industrious hand wants employment, or a disabled one, relief. But let's see 'em; perhaps my niece may have a fancy to some bawbles. (*taking them*) Why sure---No, it can't. Why, yes---They are the very family jewels lately sent me by one of my friends, now abroad, for his nephew, young Bewley. Tell me how you came by them.

Period. (*aside*) Here's an anecdote! What the devil shall I do? Old Nunc has certainly stole them. (*to Oldstyle*) Sir, 'tis a commission of delicacy, and we never betray a client's, that is, a friends secrets.

Sir Caustic. Yes, but I must know there's some villainly in this business.

Period. I'll warrant there is.

Sir Caustic.

Sir Caustic. These diamonds were certainly consigned to me by my old friend, as a present to his nephew, and for the purpose of redeeming a family estate out of the claws of an old rogue of an attorney.

Period. (aside) Aye, aye, that's uncle sure enough.

Sir Caustic. When I left Cornwall, having some enquires to make in London about my deceased son, and the case being urgent, I dispatch'd a trusty agent with the diamonds, but notwithstanding my repeated enquiries, I have never heard of either diamonds or messenger. All that I know is, that the young man, who was then from home, never received them.

Period. I assure you, Sir, they came fairly into my hands, whatever roguery they may have encountered before; but do you keep them, and——-

Sir Caustic. Yes, but the person who entrusted them to you!!!

Period. He'll be here this evening, and you shall see him. (*aside*) Get the old shark off tho' if I can.

Enter Lady ZEPHYRINE *and* GURNET. (*thro' Doors*)

(*Lady* ZEPHYRINE *dressed in the extreme of the fashion.*

L. Zeph. You're welcome to the Abbey, Sir. Believe me, I am rejoiced to see you well, and in this country.

Sir Caustic. Thank you, thank you, Ma'am. I suppose my niece will be here by and bye---tho' methinks she's not over civil.

Gurnet.

Gurnet. Why this is my ward.

Period. Yes, Sir, this is my sister.

Sir Caustic. It isn't, nor it can't, nor it shan't be. You, my niece Zephyrine Mutable. What! this, I suppose, is one of your agreeable surprizes too? (*to Period*)

L. Zeph. Really, Sir, this is so strange!

Sir Caustic. Strange! Aye, strange indeed. Let me see. (*looking in his pocket, takes out a picture, returns it, and takes out another*) No! that's not it---Oh! Here it is---Here's a picture of my niece, done only two years ago; and you're no more like her than I am to Tippoo Saib.

L. Zeph. The miniature, I presume, Sir, which was sent you to Cornwall before my grandmother's death?

Period. Oh, the want of likeness, Sir, is nothing. These cursed painters only think of making what they call a good picture, and whether it resembles you or your horse, is no concern of theirs. Why, you might have had what they call a portrait of Lord Orton only three months ago, and it mightn't be like me the least in the world---I appeal to Lady Zephyrine.

Sir Caustic. Zooks, Sir, but did you ever know black ringlets change to auburn? Then, instead of the clear brown lively complexion of my niece, a dead white stucco; (*looking at the picture*) and for the cheeks, egad the amateur has outdone the artist, and the rosebud is become a downright piony.

L. Zeph. Perhaps, Sir, my exterior may deserve this censure; yet, I trust, I have a heart which will not be found unworthy of your affection.

Sir

Sir Caustic. Why then, I wish pretty women with worthy hearts wou'dn't deform the index to them.

L. Zeph. But fashion, Sir—

Sir Castic. Don't talk to me of fashion. Will you, or any woman in these days, ever be as handsome as your grandmother? And did she rouge, and varnish, or wear a red wig? I detest your modern whim whams.

Period. Modern, Sir! Why the ladies all dress now à l'antique—Gone back two thousand years at least. Nothing but Portias and Lucretias, from St. James's Square to St. George's Fields.

Sir Caustic. Aye, aye; as absurd as they are licentious, and they hav'n't even discernment to see, that their follies are a satire on their vices. There's Mrs. Gadfly, who gets rid of her children to a nurse as soon as they're born, and to a boarding-school as soon as they can speak, trusses and twists her head up to imitate the mother of the Gracchi!

Period. Faith, it's very true—Then, there's the fat, giggling widow, who married her butler three weeks after her husband's death, wears a black wig à la Niobe.

L. Zeph. Come, Sir, forgive me for not being so old, or so handsome as my grandmother; and let me shew you our improvements.

Sir Caustic. I've seen too many of your improvements already; however, I'll accompany you, because, in my time, attention to women was the fashion.

Period. (*aside*) Now if I cou'd borrow this miniature of Lady Zephyrine, it wou'd certainly convince Mrs. Derville of my being the real Lord Orton. Sir Caustic will you oblige me with Lady

Zephyrine's picture for a few hours? I've a friend hard by, who copies admirably.

Sir Caustic. (*gives the picture*) Here—But hark ye. Hadn't your friend better just take a peep at the red wig? (*going*)

Period. Stay, Sir Caustic, you have lately received letters from India. Cou'dn't you now assist me with some little domestic anecdote of the Bengal tyger, or the amours of Tippoo Saib, or some secret history of a Nabob, just to embellish my tour.

Sir Caustic. Tippoo Saib, Nabobs, and Bengal tygers, in a tour to Carnarvonshire! Why what the devil shou'd they do here?

Period. Introduce them—perfectly apropos. I see a palace by the road side newly built—half a dozen farms turn'd into a park—immorality plenty; provisions scarce. I conclude, of course, I am in the vicinage of a Nabob; then pop comes in the secret history, and Tippoo Saib, and the Bengal tyger, by way of episode.

Sir Caustic. Why, if you cou'd make this rambling mania serve to expose the danger of overgrown, ill-spent, fortunes, perhaps I might be tempted to take a frolic with you myself.

[*Exit, leading Lady Zephyrine.*

Period. And now for my attack on the fair cottager. Sorry to leave you, Deputy, but if you want amusement, I'll lend you my manuscript, or my tour to Wandsworth.

Gurnet. No, I thank your Lordship; I'm just going to take a peep in the butler's pantry, and I can't say I'm much of a reader—never buy any books. I gave sixpence once for a Treatise on Corn Cutting, and instead of finding any thing to

to the purpose, there were politicks enough to crack the clearest head in Lombard-street.

Period. Yes, it's our way. When we want to push a subject, we give it a taking title; no matter whether the book contains a word that answers to it, or not. [*Exit Period.*

Gurnet. A pretty sample of nobility this: begins making love to my wife, before he'd got his boots off; and I've already found 'em twice closetted together from poetical sympathy, as Mrs. Gurnet calls it, Just now too, I overheard them make an appointment, under pretence of reading their productions in the Park; but I'll after them—prevention is better than remedy. These whirligig chaps think if a man lives east of Charing-cross, he's made for nothing but cuckoldom and gluttony, tho' egad the line of demarcation has long been past, and I don't see, but horns and turtle are as much the fashion in the west as in the east [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *A Parlour at Mrs.* DERVILLE'S.—WINIFRED *pushing* BELFORD *into a Closet at the Extremity of the Scene.*

Winif. There, there, you'll be safe enough; my mistress never uses this closet; and to make sure, I'll lock it, and take the key—I wish tho' my Lord had done with his trials and disguises; he'll certainly get me into some scrape at last. Oh? how your people of fine notions torment themselves. [*Exit.*

Enter PERIOD *as Lord* ORTON, *and Mrs.* DERVILLE.

Mrs. Derv. Nay, then, I acknowledge, my Lord, that I do know the person who assumed your name; but as I am certain he cou'd have no concern in the theft of your letters and baggage, you must excuse my betraying him.

Period. (*affecting passion*) Alas! Madam, these are trifling considerations; but if you knew how deeply I am interested in discovering an impostor, who, I fear, is a fortunate rival——

Mrs. Derv. Rival, my Lord! If you have no further commands, permit me——

Period. Commands, Madam! No! I have to supplicate, to tell you, that I have long admir'd, long ador'd you. Did you but know how I have pursued you; from Florence to Leghorn; from Leghorn to London; and from London to Carnarvon; but you'll know it all when you read my tour, and I'm sure you'll admire the style, and pity the author.

Mrs Derv. (*ironically*) Why, I must confess, your Lordship seems in a state deserving of pity. How you became acquainted with these circumstances, I am at a loss to guess; but if this is not some new artifice, and you are really Lord Orton, I trust you will not avail yourself of a situation, you perhaps know, is unfortunate, to insult me.

Period. I insult you, Ma'am! I never insulted any one in my life, except a coffee-house critic. Surely you cannot suspect my honour, or doubt my rank. I have this moment left the Abbey. Then there's my sister's picture. (*giving her the picture*) Let that convince you—have compassion

on

on my sufferings Madam—I'll draw you up such a settlement—I'll dedicate my work to you—I'll——(*Mrs. Derville takes the picture carelessly, but on looking at it, nearly faints.*)

Mrs. Derv. Tell me, my Lord—I conjure you by your dearest hopes. Tell me how you came by this picture?

Period. 'Sdeath! what's all this? That picture Ma'am—that picture. Why, Ma'am, to say the truth, it's not mine; it's my uncle's, who is now at the Abbey.

Mrs. Derv. Permit me to keep it a few hours. It was once mine, and is not the portrait of Lady Zephyrine. Look at it, (*shewing the picture*) it's of the utmost importance that I shou'd see the owner.

Period. Now I recollect, I saw the old gentleman with two pictures, and he has by mistake given me the wrong one. (*looking at the miniature*) No, no, this is certainly not the lady with the red wig, and——

Enter WINIFRED.

Winif. Ma'am, here's Mr. Jargon, Lady Zephyrine's suitor, at the door, and he's so rude, he protests he must see you, and have an answer to his letter.

Period. (*aside*) Zounds, what that rascal, my cousin Jargon! Nay, then, I must vanish. Will you give me leave Ma'am, just to slip up the chimney, or out at the house top, or into the clock case, or under a cheese press; I have such reasons, 'sdeath, I wou'dn't, for my peerage, be seen by this fellow.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. Well, you may go this way, my Lord, I shall be releas'd from him at any rate. (*shews Period*) Yes, this Jargon sent me an impertinent letter this morning, and I'll see him; for tho' Lady Zephyrine's conduct towards me has been unworthy, yet, if I can, by convincing her of the baseness of her pretended lover, save her from the ruin of such an union, it will repay me for the momentary indignity of his addresses. Winifred, you may shew Mr. Jargon in. [*Exit Win.* Alas! I had hoped the situation I have chosen, wou'd have serv'd me from being thus persecuted. Belford too, so warm an advocate for Lady Zephyrine, and so long absent—Heigho!

Enter JARGON *and* WINIFRED.

Jargon. Faith Ma'am, you're so snug, and as difficult of access as a poet in debt; I've been arguing with the tongue and the claws of your Welch dragon here this half hour.

Winif. Dragon, indeed! A conceited, ugly fellow. [*Exit.*

Jargon. Well, what say you, my little original? What do you think of my proposal? A house in Marybone, a black boy, and a curricle—None of your old-fashion'd mysterious work; nobody now do any thing they're asham'd of, or at least are not asham'd of any thing they do—an opera box next my wife (that is to be) Lady Zephyrine—a faro table—then our whole order in your train—puff you in the papers—(*takes out a glass*) stare you into notice at the Theatre, you'll make such a blaze.

Mrs. Derv. (*aside*) Oh! patience—But I'll have my revenge, and for Lady Zephyrine's sake, 'Tis

'Tis impossible, Sir, for me to treat your generosity as it deserves, till I have had a little time to reflect. But if you'll meet me at eight this evening in the Hermitage, you shall receive my answer. This key, which the steward lends me during the absence of the family, will admit you. At present, I must entreat you to depart.

Jargon. Oh, oh! she parleys—Yes, yes, Ma'am—give you time—all fair, that I see you understand business. No Philandering—'tis not our way. Negociate—dispute term—offer our ultimatum—sign the treaty, and heigh for the Black Boy and Curricle!

Mrs. Derv. I must beg, Sir, at present, that you'll retire.

Jargon. I'm gone. Won't interrupt your reflections. Oh! I'm a made, a complete made man. Such a decoy for a Faro-bank! [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs. GURNET.

Mrs. Gurnet. (*in a flippant familiar manner*) Pray, excuse this intrusion, my dear. A countryman told me just now I shou'd find Lord Orton here, and we are going to have the most delightful literary ramble in the Park.

GURNET *entering with* WINIFRED.

Gurnet. I tell you, they're both here; I watch'd 'em in. Why, you rural Go-between, I'll have you put in the stocks—sent to the house of correction. So, so, Mrs. Muse, I've found you, have I? This comes of your sentiments—your odes—your pastorals—But I'll search out your Apollo—I'll have a divorce, if its only to warn other

other men of the danger of rhyming wives, and the iniquity of travelling authors, and tour-mongers.

Mrs. Gurnet. Mr. Gurnet, you make me blush, for the coarseness of your ideas. You ought to know, that the little platonic attachment between me and Lord Orton does you honour.

Gurnet. Oh! what assurance reading and writing gives a woman! If you hadn't been a poet, and an author, you'd have had some shame—Shan't escape though. I'll ferret out your platonic Apollo, I warrant—(*looks about, and stops before the closet where Belford is*)—Aye, I have him---here he is. Open the door, I say.

Mrs. Derv. Sir, this violence——

Gurnet. Out of the way, thou village handmaid of iniquity! Where's the key? I'll have him out.

Mrs. Derv. Open the door, Winifred, that I may be releas'd from these insults. I assure you, Sir——

Winif. (*aside*) Blessed St. David! what shall I do? Lord, Ma'am, I can't find the key; and the gentleman ought to be asham'd to make such an outcry in a modest house. Why, there's nothing in the closet but wool.

Gurnet. (*shews a part of Belford's coat*) Then the wool has manufactur'd itself into cloth; for I'll swear here's a piece of a man's coat between the door. Now what say you, Mrs. Modesty?

Winif. Then I'm sure the Fairies have been here.

Mrs. Derv. What can this mean? Let the door be opened this instant.

Winif. Well, if I must---I believe, for my part, the house is haunted. [*Winifred opens the closet-door, and discovers Belford.*

Enter

Enter Sir CAUSTIC OLDSTYLE, *who ſpeaks from within.*

[*The ſurprize and confuſion of Mrs. Derville ſhould appear as the effect of ſhame at detection. Belford turns againſt the ſcene in agitation.*]

Mrs. Derv. Heavens! Mr. Belford!

Mrs. Gurnet Why, this is the moſt myſterious event!!!

Gurnet. What's this one of your Welch Fairies? or is it another of your platonic attachments, Mrs. Gurnet?

Mrs. Derv. Cruel, ungenerous Belford!

Sir Cauſtic. What, a man hid in my pretty cottager's cloſet! I came here to thank you for your kindneſs this morning, and to eſcape for a moment the diſſipation of a faſhionable family in retirement; but I ſee licentiouſneſs is not confined to the manſions of wealth. Adieu, young woman. I had hoped to find, in you, one who had preſerved, with modern elegance of manners, a ſimple and uncorrupted heart. Perhaps the time may come, when you may grow tir'd of that vice for which you do not ſeem intended; and in the hours of ſorrow, and the pangs of repentance---remember---you have a friend. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Derv. Stop, Sir.---Oh! how ſhall I ſurvive this humiliation!---*(to Gurnet)*---For you, Si——

Mrs. Gurnet. Yes, you indelicate monſter!—This comes of your groſs ſuſpicions. But I'll write a romance on purpoſe to expoſe you. I'll make you an epitome of all the German Barons, and Italian Counts. I'll—— [*Exit.*

Gurnet. And I'll secure myself from a platonic cuckoldom in future. "I'll take you to Garlic-"hill, and there you shall fast from pens, ink, "and paper, as long as you live. So, come along, "and let's get out of rural felicity and the de-"lights of retirement." [*Exit Mrs. Gurnet.*

Belford. Before you go, Sir, let me exculpate—'Sdeath! they're gone, Madam! I feel too much the cause you have for resentment, to attempt any justification. Yet, be assur'd the conduct to which I have descended is punish'd, cruelly punish'd, by this fatal conviction, that I am doom'd to love where I cannot esteem. [*Exit.*

Mrs. Derv. (*after a moment of agitation, turns to Winifred*) Treacherous, ungrateful girl! you who have witness'd my hours of sorrow and seclusion, have seen with what solicitude I have avoided mankind. If your heart is not entirely corrupted, you will feel with remorse the complicated disgrace and wretchedness in which you have involv'd me.

Winif. I'm sure, Ma'am I didn't mean——

Mrs. Derv. Well, I shall not reproach you: but my resolution is taken. The only further service I require of you, is to prepare for my leaving this place to-morrow morning

Winif. Oh! Ma'am, surely you won't leave the farm, and the stock, and the cows, and the poultry?

Mrs. Derv. Argue not, but obey me. I'll now keep my appointment with Lady Zephyrine, that I may at least explain my own conduct, if not reform her's. Did you send my note to Mr. Bewley?

Winif. Yes, Madam—he receiv'd it two hours ago.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. Then this picture---I'll see the stranger at the Abbey, learn how it came into his possession, and then bid adieu for ever to a scene in which my innocence could not protect me from shame and misery. Oh! never let the humble votary of retirement seek it near the contagious abode of riches and dissipation. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.---*A Park or Pleasure Ground.*

Enter BELFORD.

Belford. Yes, this is the place---I can't have mistaken. Jargon must past this way to the hermitage; and if he is not as cowardly as he is base, I shall at once revenge the perfidy of Mrs. Derville, and prevent his designs on my sister. Oh! Eugenia, thou hast made my life of so little value, that I do not hesitate to risk it, even against that of a coxcomb---But I hear footsteps. (*retires as behind the trees.*)

Enter Lady ZEPHYRINE.

Lady Zeph. Well, if she does but come, I shall enjoy her confusion at finding her gallant peer dwindled into a spinster; she's here --And now for my triumph over this little prude with her heroic sentiments and her closetted heroes,

Enter Mrs. DERVILLE.

You seem in search of somebody, ma'am.

Mrs. Derv. (distinctly, and with dignity) I am, madam; I came in search of a female who was once a model of feminine excellence---As lovely in her mind as her person; but who, seduced by dissipation, dazzled by splendour, and perverted by vanity, abandoned the object of her first

first affections, degrades her family, and sullies her reputation by becoming the dupe, and the victim of---a gambler.

Lady Zeph. (*confused*) Enough, madam---Hold! I——

Mrs. Derv. Nay, this is not all. In the wantonness of an unfeeling prosperity, either curious, or jealous, forgetting the dignity of her rank, and the delicacy of her sex, she came, in a mean disguise, to assail with the temptations of affluence and vice the integrity of an---inferior.

Lady Zeph. (*mortified.*) Oh! spare me, spare me, I entreat you.

Mrs. Derv. And *if* unaware of the artifice, dazzled by the title she assumed, or allured by the offered prospect of wealth and pleasure, the rectitude she attack'd, had proved too weak for the combat---O ungenerous, unworthy triumph! to have found that a poor, friendless, unprotected woman had yielded to the same temptations which, under all the advantages of birth, fortune, and surrounding friends have alienated the affections, and corrupted the heart of Lady Zephyrine Mutable——

Lady Zeph. Forgive me, you have taught me a lesson which that heart will never forget. From this moment I relinquish my assumed follies, and dare to be myself.

Mrs. Derv. Yes, Lady Zephyrine, I'm persuaded you were designed by nature for something better than a fashionable coquette.

Lady Zeph. (*gaily*) I dare say I was; for I feel already as if I had just put off my great grandfather's coat of armour; why do you know, that though I play on the tambourine, I hate the sound of it; and, though I boast of being a good shot,

shot, the touch of fire arms gives me an ague; and, as for cards, in my grandmother's time, I have gone to sleep with three honours in my hand at the most critical point of a rubber. But fashion, my dear Mrs. Derville, fashion !---one doesn't like to be different from other people.

Mrs. Derv. Ah, Lady Zephyrine, don't deceive yourself. It is not the desire of resembling other people, but that of being distinguished from them, is the source of your errors. Believe me, the trifling and vicious characters whom you have been so zealous to imitate, are few, compar'd to those, among your own rank, who behold a conduct like yours with regret and censure——

Lady Zeph. Nay, I am sure I would never have endured the labour of making myself ridiculous, If I hadn't thought it fashionable.

Mrs. Derv. No, no, than heaven, neither vice nor folly are yet fashionable. And, tho' both are too much tolerated, the example of domestic virtues, conspicious in the highest station of the kingdom, will, I trust, long preserve our national manners from that last state of depravation which erects vice into a model.

Lady Zeph. (*archly*) You preach charmingly. Pray was all this eloquence taught you by the closet orator?

Mrs. Derv. I understand your raillery, and when I acknowledge that this young man is the secret object of my affections, I hope you will credit me, when I assure you, I am yet to learn the motives of his concealment. But no matter. To-morrow, Lady Zephyrine, I quit this country for ever.

Lady Zeph. For ever?

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. Yes; but before I go, I have a communication to make, which, if you do not *love* Mr. Jargon——

Lady Zeph. Love him! I won't ſay I hate him, becauſe he's too contemptible for hatred; but I hate myſelf for the folly which obliges me to liſten to him.

Mrs. Derv. How has your Ladyſhip forfeited the beſt privilege of rank? that of repelling impertinence?

Lady Zeph. Why, as I have confided my follies to you, you may as well know the conſequences of them. This vile Jargon has won of me impoſſible ſums; I am no arithmetician, I can't recollect and multiply the items; but I have been obliged to give him a note for—four of the ſix thouſands which are my whole fortune, independent of my brother.

Mrs. Derv. Fatal imprudence! read this letter.

Lady Zephyrine reads---at firſt to herſelf.

Lady Zeph. (*reading*) "Accept my terms--- "my marriage with the little idol of the Abbey, "ſhall not prevent my adoring you with the "moſt perfect, and unimaginable devotion---

"JARGON."

Well, the wretch is no hypocrite; for he ſcarcely takes the trouble of profeſſing a paſſion for me. However, if you'll give me this letter, tho' I don't expect a cold, ſyſtematic coxcomb ſhould be ſuſceptible of ſhame for the commiſſion of a baſe action, he may of the ridicule to which he is expoſed by detection. He'll be at the Abbey this evening.

Mrs. Derv. I fancy we ſhall find him without going ſo far. Come this way, and I'll explain to you as we go along.

Lady Zeph.

Lady Zeph. (*taking her hand*) My fair monitreſs, I came here in expectation of a triumph, which, I truſt, my heart would, hereafter, have reproached me for; but to you I am indebted for the beſt of triumphs, the triumph over my own follies. [*Exeunt.*

" SCENE II.---*Before the Door of the Hermitage.*

" *Lady* ZEPHYRINE *and Mrs.* DERVILLE, " *following each other cautiouſly.*

" *Mrs. Derv.* I've exceeded my time, and, " perhaps, my ſpark's patience. He's not here.

" *Lady Zeph.* (*ſoftly*) I'll juſt peep in at the " hermitage window. (*looks in*) Well, my dear, " if you are not the object of his waking thoughts, " I dare ſay you are of his dreams, for there he is, " faſt aſleep.

" *Mrs. Derv.* I ſuppoſe he has ſacrificed ſo " freely to your Ladyſhip's birth-day, that he has " forgotten both me and himſelf.

" *Lady Zeph.* O, don't ſuppoſe a gameſter " ever forgets *himſelf.* (*looks in at the window*) " I dare ſay now, he has been calculating chances. " Look, there's his pocket-book and pencil down " by him.

" *Mrs. Derv.* I wiſh we cou'd take it without " waking him, and write both our names in it— " if he is yet ſuſceptible of ſhame.

" *Lady Zeph.* A gameſter ſuſceptible of ſhame! " O, you know nothing of the world.

" *Mrs. Derv.* Have you the maſter key of the " grounds?

" *Lady Zeph.* Luckily I have—here it is— " but——

" *Mrs. Derv.*

" *Mrs. Derv.* Huſh! ſtay! (*goes in cauti-*
" *ouſly, and brings out the book*) Here's the
" book—will your Ladyſhip write your name firſt
" —quick! I tremble ſo.
" [*Lady Zephyrine taking the book from Mrs.*
" *Derville, a paper drops out of it.*]
" *Lady Zeph.* Heavens, what's this? My
" note, which, thro' fear of being expoſed to
" my uncle, I renewed on my coming of age this
" morning.
" *Mrs. Derv.* Surely, what has been ſo baſely
" obtained, might, without blame, be cancelled.
" Decide---perhaps a moment——
" *Lady Zeph.* (*after ſome agitation*) No,
" tho' this wretch has *no honor*, MINE ſhall be
" ſacred. The loſs of my fortune is the *juſt*
" puniſhment of my folly, --and I will abide by
" it. Replace the book.
" *Mrs. Derv.* As you pleaſe. (*aſide, takes*
" *the note unperceived by Lady Zephyrine, and*
" *returns with the book cautiouſly.*) But, by
" your Ladyſhip's leave, the point of honor ſhall
" be determined by your uncle, in the mean
" while I'll ſecure the point of law. You ſeem
" agitated.
" *Lady Zeph.* I am---I have had a little ſtrug-
" gle between love and integrity---ah, Eugenia!
" with that little ſum I could have retired with
" Bewley, but now."

Enter BEWLEY, *gaily.*

Bewley. What, again, Lady Zephyrine. Why, I am become the very favourite of Fortune. Let her throw her acres to fools, and her droſs to knaves---" here's metal more attractive!"

Lady Zeph. You are gay, Sir!

Bewley. Yes, gay as your Ladyſhip's ſmiles. Why not? Why ſhou'dn't a man without a care left be gay? Others are the ſlaves of Fortune, or of Love; but for me, I'm a free man---I've loſt my eſtate by the folly of my anceſtors, and I've loſt my miſtreſs by------

Lady Zeph. (*archly*) By her own, eh?

Bewley. Hem---no matter---One ſmile from Lady Zephyrine to-night, one adieu to-morrow, and heigh for London.

Lady Zeph. (*timidly*) For London, Sir?

Bewley. Yes. Isn't London the place for a man of ſpirit without ſixpence? Are there not hazard tables, and faro banks, where thoſe who have nothing become rich, and thoſe who are rich become nothing? So, Cupid, take wing---honeſty, avaunt, and heigh for London!

Lady Zeph. (*with volubility and ſpirit*) I commend your reſolution. Ah, the bewitching joys of the gaming table, and the ſociety of dear friends impatient to ruin you, the animating ſuſpence between hope and fear, while Avarice, with ſanguine eye, and dilated palm, ſeizes in imagination its devoted ſacrifice.---Oh---glorious! heigh for London! (*turning ſuddenly to Bewley*) Will you draw ſtraws with me for a couple of thouſands?

Bewley. No, Madam---your ſtake's too high for a ruin'd man.

Lady Zeph. Juſt the contrary---why, if you're ruin'd already, you know you can't loſe. But, come, if you won't draw ſtraws for the two thouſands, will you take them without?

Bewley. No, Madam. I---I---(*ſurprized*).

Lady Zeph. Why, what an untractable mortal it is! Then, will you take me and the two thouſand

ſand together?---*(She ſtops ſhort, and then lays her hand on his arm with a tender frankneſs---* Oh, Bewley! this levity of your's is aſſumed---'tis in vain to deny it. I know you love me. My heart is yet---nay, it ever has been your's. Will you accept my hand along with it?

Bewley. (after ſome agitation) Believe me, Lady Zephyrine, were that heart what I once thought it, the gift you offer, though it were accompanied by ſlavery, poverty, and a thouſand ills, ſhould be received with tranſport. But now, forgive me, had I been rich, love might have tempted me to forget the conduct I have ſo long deplored; as it is, it ſhall not be ſaid, that I was bribed by the fortune of the wife to overlook the errors of the miſtreſs. [*Exit in diſorder.*

Lady Zeph. Here's an obſtinate wretch! But he ſhall take me, errors and all, yet.

[*During the foregoing ſcene* BELFORD *enters, and talks in the back-ground with Mrs.* DERVILLE, *in an air of ſupplication.*]

Mrs. DERVILLE *coming forward with* BELFORD.

Mrs. Derv. The paſſion you profeſs, Sir, is no excuſe for your degrading its object. From this moment we part; and let our ſeparation be accompanied by this remembrance, that your miſfortunes have not prevented your creating the tendereſt intereſt in that heart which you have overwhelm'd with ſhame and affliction.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Derville and Lady Zephyrine.*

Belford. Dear, generous Eugenia! Yet ſtill the myſtery of her appearance---But away with ſuſpicion. I'll now to the Abbey, diſcover myſelf to

Sir Cauſtic Oldſtyle, and, by a candid explanation of my conduct to Mrs. Derville, plead my pardon:

" For doubts caus'd by paſſion ſhe never can blame;
" They are not ill-founded, or ſhe feels the ſame."

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.---*A Room at the Abbey.*

Sir CAUSTIC OLDSTYLE *and* PERIOD.

Period. Then we've hung the cloiſters and ſtatues with artificial flowers. The ſpace between is made into a temporary room, in imitation of a grotto. How I ſhall ſhine in deſcribing it!

Sir Cauſtic. I hate your paltry imitations of nature, while nature herſelf is neglected. You'll run from the ſhade of your villas to ſee a canvas grove at the Opera-houſe---or only advertiſe that the Pantheon is converted into an Eſquimeaux hut, and all the drawing-rooms ſhall be deſerted.

Period. A proof, Sir, of our love of ſimplicity.

Sir Cauſtic. Yes, as you eat dry biſcuits after a luxurious dinner. No, its mere wantonneſs, and rage for novelty. 'Twas but juſt now I met a fellow with a rule and pencil, eſtimating how much 'twou'd coſt to pull down this venerable pile, and erect ſome Italian gimcrack on the ſcite.

Period. What, Mr. Stucco, the great architect, you *mean?* Yes, he's to run up a ſmart villa, convert the chapel into a private theatre, the kitchen into an ice-houſe, and then he's to make the completeſt ruin in the park.

Sir Cauſtic. Yes, yes; I dare ſay you'll not want for ruins, if you've ſent for a great architect. But, mark

mark me, I'll have nothing to do with your extravagances. I never obtained my wealth by disgracing my country, nor shall it be spent in corrupting it. No—I'll adopt the first blockhead that comes in my way, provided he's not one of our own family.

Period. (*aside*) Now, if the old gentleman would but keep his word, then how I would write—such paper, such a type!—Ah! didn't you say, Sir, you were looking out for a blockhead of an heir? There's a very honest fellow, a friend of mine, Tim Period, a sort of a crackbrain—he's your man, Sir—Adso, you'll have the merriest heir in christendom.—(*takes down a tamborine, and plays*)

Sir Caustic. Ah! what, you're going to have a dance? Well, as 'tis my niece's birth-day, egad, if old Twang, the harper, were alive, I don't know but I might foot it a bit myself.

Period. I dare say, Sir, Lady Zephyrine will, to oblige you, just——(*imitates the action of playing*)

Sir Caustic. Zounds, sirrah!—why, she's not turned drummer.

Period. Not absolutely beat the drum, Sir; but this little elegant instrument—(*still imitating*)—Such grace! such attitudes!

Sir Caustic. Mercy on us! what as a modest woman to do with attitudes? Does she dance on the rope too? But I'll have done with her—I'll cut a passage through Snowdon, make a tunnel under the Irish Channel, build churches of porcelaine, and erect bridges of pearl—I'll die a beggar.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Here's young Squire Bewley, my Lord; he says your Lordship desired to see him.

Period.

Period. Shew him into my office—(*recollecting himself*)—Psha? my dressing-room, I mean.—Will you go with me, Sir? You know you sent for him about the diamonds.

Sir Caustic. Aye, I'll follow you.

Exeunt Period and Servant.

This Bewley, too, I suppose, is some puppy, who has been running a match between his fortune and his constitution, and the latter happens to have held out longest. Aye, aye, his uncle's prodigality to him will be the only means of his starting again on the same course. But this is the way—a man scorches five and twenty years abroad, or abridges all the comforts of his life at home, as I have done, only to acquire a fortune for a son who turns jockey, and breaks his neck; on a nephew, who turns author, and loses his wits; or a niece, who beats the drum, and wears a red wig. But I'll game, build, die a beggar.——

Enter a Servant, shewing in Mrs. DERVILLE,

Well, young gentlewoman!—There's another disappointment too—Who would have thought—But the whole sex are syrens—crocodiles! I presume your business isn't with me—You want the young spark within, I suppose?

Mrs. Derv. Your pardon, Sir; but if you are the uncle of Lord Orton——

Sir Caustic. Not I---I am uncle to nobody in the world. I have neither nephews nor nieces. No, no---thank Heaven, I have done with them.---There's a couple of modern youngsters within, indeed, who write tours, and beat the drum---But mind, they don't belong to me.

Mrs.

Mrs. Derv. I thought, Sir, you had been the gentleman from whom Lord Orton received a miniature, that——

Sir Caustic. Aye, 'was a fancy picture---not like any body in the world---never had an original. If you want to enquire about the painter, Lady Zephyrine will tell you; and if you don't want to put me in a passion, don't say another word about it.

Mrs. Derv. This is the strangest old gentleman!---I will not, then, trouble you, Sir, with this enquiry; yet, as I leave this country to morrow, never to return, give me leave to justify myself from the suspicions which the extraordinary scene you were witness to——

Sir Caustic. What, the closet scene! But I'll not hear a word---I'll not believe a syllable. There has been neither truth nor simplicity in any woman these fifty years.

Mrs Derv. It is not, then, for an unhappy stranger, like myself, to contend against your prejudices; and I must, though with regret, depart unjustified in your opinion.

Sir Caustic. Eh! what! who told you to depart? How should I know you were unhappy? Who are you? Where are you going?

Mrs. Derv. Alas! Sir, I can scarcely tell---If possible, where I shall be no longer liable to the persecution of man.

Sir Caustic. Then you'll travel far enough. But what the deuce, don't you know where you are going? You belong to somebody---you came from somewhere---you didn't drop from the clouds---ride through the air in a whirlwind, or pop out of the sea on a wave. Then there's that addle-brain, Lord Orton, in love with you---why, if

if you cou'd explain the spark in the closet, and were not of mean birth, why, as women go——

Mrs. Derv. (*with dignity*) My birth, Sir could not be the obstacle, were there not other reasons. It is at least equal to his own---a distinguished name, a fortune---But why do I dwell on past misery? Why suffer——

Sir Caustic. (*looking earnestly at her*) If, after searching so long in vain, I should have stumbled at once---Yes, the very features---you interest me, young woman. You are too pretty to be wand'ring about the world without protection. Confide in me---I'm no gallant---no seducer. Thank Heaven, I'm not old enough yet to run away with a girl of twenty.

Mrs. Derv. Your frankness is to me, Sir, more valuable than compliment; and if the relation of my misfortunes, will gratify you——

Sir Caustic. Proceed---proceed. You women allow nobody to have any curiosity but yourselves. Go on.

Mrs. Derv. I have already confessed, Sir, that my birth was elevated; my fortune large. At an early age I was deprived of my parents, and left to the guardianship of an uncle, whose bigotry and avarice suggested to him the design of burying the claimant of a fortune, to which he was next kin, in a convent. Aware of his design---averse to a cloister, and irritated by persecution, I accepted of the assistance of a young Englishman, whom chance threw in my way, and eloped from the convent where I was placed.

Sir Caustic. An Englishman!---the convent!---Oh! go on.

Mrs. Derv. My deliverer, I found, was poor; and, e'er I had time to consult my heart, with all the

the enthuſiaſm of gratitude at ſixteen, I gave him my hand.

Sir Cauſtic. It is---it muſt be! Conclude, I beſeech you!!

Mrs. Derv. My fortune being left me on the day of marriage, for ſome months we lived in a conſtant round of gaiety and expence. But, ere two years were paſſed, my huſband's unbounded diſſipation firſt corrupted, and at length hardened, his heart. Deprived of his affection, abandoned, neglected, I lived, ſcarcely certain, even of his exiſtence; till, at the end of the third year after our marriage, he was brought to me, mangled by a fall from his horſe, ſenſeleſs, and expiring.

Sir Cauſtic. Unfortunate girl!

Mrs. Derv. My fortune diſſipated, alone, unprotected, awakened to a ſenſe of my early imprudence, and weaned from an attachment which I had in a thoughtleſs moment rendered a duty, I now felt all the horrors of my ſituation---My heart wounded by injuries, my ſpirit embittered by ingratitude, I beheld the world with diſguſt, mankind with horror, and, at nineteen, I fancied myſelf a miſanthropiſt. With the ſcattered remains of my fortune I retired, under a borrowed name, to a convent; but the diſappointed avarice of my guardian purſued me to my retreat, and obliged me to eſcape from Florence to Leghorn. Public events again removed me to England; and, by the aſſiſtance of an Engliſh ſervant, I at length ſettled in my preſent ſituation.

Sir Cauſtic. And your name is Harcourt, the wife, the generous wife of my unhappy boy. Oh, Eugenia! how ſhall I reward you for the miſeries you have ſuffered?

Mrs. Derv. The father of Harcourt! Then this picture is------

Sir Cauſtic. Is mine. It was ſent me by my ſon on his marriage; and while he was ſoliciting pardon for errors, which had occaſioned his baniſhment from his family.

Mrs. Derv. Ah, dear Sir, had I known---but the name of Oldſtyle, of Orton, had never been mentioned to me.

Sir Cauſtic. The title is recently deſcended to my nephew, and the name of Oldſtyle I adopted on an acquiſition of fortune from my late wife's father. But come, retire to a leſs public apartment, keep this diſcovery ſecret a few minutes, and, in the mean while, dear, injured girl, remember you have found a parent.

[*Exit, leading Mrs. Derville.*

SCENE IV. *Cloiſters on each Side of the Stage, illuminated and ornamented with Flowers at the Extremity.---Statues and Trees ornamented in the ſame manner.---Muſic.*

Enter Mr. and Mrs. GURNET, *and Lady* ZEPHYRINE *after.*---JARGON.---*Then* BEWLEY *from a different side of the Stage; and, at last, Sir* CAUSTIC, BELFORD, *and* PERIOD, *as in Converſation.---Muſic ceases. Lady* ZEPHYRINE *approaches Sir* CAUSTIC, *and he addreſſes her.*—BELFORD *and* PERIOD *appear to talk together till the Denouement.*

Sir Caustic. Aye, aye, I forgive the drum and the wig. I'm in ſo good a humour, I could forgive any thing. Come, niece, as this is your birth-day, and as young women of one-and-twenty

twenty begin to look about 'em, I ought to inform you, that the bulk of my fortune is only at my disposal, in case my late son's wife should never appear; but, subject to this proviso, why I think a few score thousands for a wedding gown, won't hurt me.

L. Zeph. Believe me, Sir, if the discovery of the claimant you mention, contributes to your happiness, I shall not regret the retraction of your bounty.

Sir Caustic. Why, that's noble, that's an old sentiment, which even a new-fashioned outside cannot diminish the value of. I'm glad to see you are capable of receiving generously the daughter whom my good fortune has restored to me. (*goes on one side of the scene, and leads in Mrs. Derville*)

All. Mrs. Derville!!

Sir Caustic. Come, no sentimental overflowings now. Eugenia, my poor boy, was but a sorry helpmate. You chose ill for yourself. What say you to a husband of my fancy, to my nephew Lord Orton? (*pointing to Period*)

Mrs. Derv. Ah, pardon me, Sir, if I decline. There is——

Sir Caustic. What, the closet spark, I suppose. I know the whole business; but I must have you a Countess—Perhaps, in a more humble rank, you might yourself be equally happy; but the distinctions of society, which render virtue conspicuous, are a benefit to the world. So if you won't have my old fellow-traveller, honest Tim Period, why you must even take a Peer of my creation. Come, nephew, is your delicacy satisfied now; or has your Lordship any more disguises and experiments?

Mrs. Derv. What, Belford.

Lady Zeph. Yes, this is, indeed, my brother.

Belford. (*embracing her*) Dear Zephyrine! Eugenia! (*taking her hand*) my beloved Eugenia! Can you, will you pardon the deception?

Sir Caustic. No, I warrant she won't. Women never pardon any deceptions except their own. But I am too old to wait the usual fopperies of your penitence and her coquetry; and as this is one of the few deceptions which explanation will not make worse, why, you shall marry first, and you'll have time enough to explain hereafter.—And now, my pretty rake, if some sober subject of the old school would take you off my hands—Your fortune, indeed, is reduc'd; but then you can shoot flying, and beat the drum, you know.

Gurnet. Aye, and a wife may make worse noises than that. Isn't the sound of a drum better than the rumbling of an ode—What say you, Mr. Jargon, to my ward and her six thousand? There, 'tis all right and fair—India, Bank, Consols—I've turn'd it for her.

Sir Caustic. Hey! why, here's a lover for you, humming and lounging—that's modern too, I suppose.

Jargon. Lady Zephyrine's accomplishments, Sir, are too brilliant to be set in any thing but gold; and six thousand isn't a month's pin-money (powder and shot money I shou'd say) for a woman of spirit. So, Sir, with your permission, I limit my claim to four only, of the six thousand.

Lady Zeph. What relinquish "The little Idol of the Abbey?"

Mrs. Derv. And disappoint *me* of the black boy and curricle?

Jargon.

Jargon. 'Sdeath! I've lost the note! I see, ladies, you're inclin'd to be merry, and as mirth is vulgar, and I hate family parties, why, I leave you to the reigning system. (*going*)

Period. Hark ye, my honest cousin, don't depend much on your four thousand—or a note obtained by a little dexterity at the gaming table, take the thing snugly—Magistrates in town are active, Judges uncivil, and the toleration of artists of your description is no longer the—reigning system—So, snug's the word.

[*Exit Jargon.*

Lady Zeph. So, you see, good folks, I'm abandoned by one swain, and it isn't two hours ago since I was rejected by another; but as you are determined, Sir, not to be troubled with me, perhaps Mr. Bewley here, to oblige you, not on my account though, I declare.

Bewley. When I refused your offered hand, dear Lady Zephyrine, I was a beggar.—The bounty of my uncle, and Mr. Period's integrity, have now enabled me to accept, with honour, a gift it cost me so much pain to refuse.—Will you again renew——

Lady Zeph. Well, if I do condescend to forgive you, mind, 'tis purely to oblige my uncle.

Sir Caustic. Come, I think we shall be able to add enough to the six thousand for a sober pair of bays and a chariot—but none of your wildfire equipages to run over quiet people, and make anecdotes for my friend Period's travels.

" AP-GRIFFIN. (*within*)

" *Ap-Grif.* I say, I must see him.—Eh, Tim-
" my! Hast sold the diamonds? got the cash!

" *Period.*

" *Period.* Yes, I've dispos'd of 'em.—Won't " cheat my own relations. (*gives him a paper*) " I'll give you all I received.

" *Ap-Grif.* (*reads*) " Received of Humphrey " Ap-Griffin, by the hands of Mr. Timothy " Period, the under-mentioned diamonds, en- " trusted to the care of the said Ap-Griffin— " Edward Mansel." Why, you rascal, you un- " natural rogue, I'll hang, I'll quarter you.

" *Period.* Hush! hush! uncle—" Honesty, " you know, is the best policy—always do the " just thing.

" *Ap-Grif.* A plague of your memory—But " I'll be reveng'd; I'll take out a statute of " lunacy against you, and you shall scribble tours " on the walls of Bedlam as long as you live.

" [*Exit.*"

Period. And now, my Lord, I resign my peerage for a character, I hope ever to maintain, that of your friend, honest Tim Period.

Belford. We shall not forget your services; you shall be retained in all the family suits of the whole principality. We'll purchase a dozen editions of your tour.

Period. Ah, my Lord I'd rather you'd praise it. And if this good company should but approve the first edition, my gratitude will last till I travel to that " bourne, from whence no tourist returns." But as I'm in no hurry to go there at present, let me hope, in the mean while, for permission to travel this way again.

THE END.

EPILOGUE,

Spoken by Miss BETTERTON.

NO more the quizzish Bewley's destin'd wife,
And yet the Votary of modish life;
In Fashion's rounds again my fame to seek,
In Air an Amazon, in dress a Greek,
I come, a Heroine, with destructive aim,
To beat yon Covert for the Critic Game;
The Season's late; but *Birds of prey* none fear
To shoot without a licence—all the Year:
Behold me then—piece levell'd with my eye,
Prepar'd at flocks of Critics to let fly—
Yet stay—for in a random shot, who knows
but the same blow may wound both friends and foes.
Suppose, then, e'er I take a hostile station,
I try the system—of conciliation;
And still, tho' folly may the truth disguise,
Woman's best weapons are her tongue and eyes.
First, that gaunt Critic clad in Iron Grey,
Who seems to frown perdition on our Play,
Would he but smile!—do, Ma'am, make him look up,
Oh ho! he's harmless—but in haste to sup.
The Spark above, just come with eager stride,
Bespurr'd, bebooted—express from Cheapside;
His alter'd eye bode us no hostile fit,
A Maiden Aunt has spy'd him from the Pit;
In vain you shirk your damsel, and look shy,
Friend Tom, you'll have a lecture by and by.
What says that Beau? a Crop—but don't deride it,
His three-cock't hat is big enough to hide it;
Tho' nightly here—'tis not the Play's his hobby,
He only criticises in the Lobby.
Ye martial youths, who decorate our rows,
Who menace nothing but your country's foes;
No Female vainly can your suffrage crave,

You

You must be merciful, because you'e brave—
And last, and loudest, you, my friends above,
Some by our Play led here, and some by love;
Your honest fronts—seek not behind to hide,
I see you all—your Sweethearts by your side,
No low'ring Critic brows 'mongst you I find,
But John at Betty smirks, and look so kind:
Don't, Betty, cheer him with one smile to-night
'Till he applaud our Play with all his might.
That Jolly Tar, by Kate from Rotherhithe brought—
With Bard or Critic ne'er disturbs *his* thought,
He only comes to make the Gallery ring
With "Rule Britannia," and "God save the King;"
Oh! may those patriot strains long echo here,
The sweetest music to a British ear.
Yet, while on well known kindness I presume,
Our Authoress, trembling, waits from you her doom.

Printed by T. Crowder, Peterborough Court, Fleet Street.

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